CHAPTER- V

HARMONY IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

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5.1 Introduction

From Rigvedic period to Satavahana period the Indian religious organisms were based on traditional system, which was evolved through processes. In the ancient period religious institutions were prominent to shape public life. The Satavahana period witnessed some interesting changes and it has brought to light some new facts. Though stratification of society was based on Varma system, yet the transformation was possible on rapid level. Like description in Rigveda, any person having quality and excellence was able to elevate himself on higher status. The Satavahana caste is not known because they had improved their Varna and they were able to rise to the status of Brsahmins.

It seems there was scope in the system to improve their conditions social and economic. All the religious groups were having cordial relations with each other and they were having smooth social understanding among each other. The entire process was based on behavior and quality of an individual and the social system had allowed people to develop their inherent or latent qualities. Thus the root cause behind religious harmony was in the process of socialization which was very true because the people were able to forget their ego and caste ideologies.

According to Swami Vivekanand religion was search of interplay already prevailing in human soul. During ancient India religion was an important force. The mainstream of religion went on changing from time to time. However, the basic values have remained the same. The Indian concept of Dharma and western religion differs from each other. The Indian Dharma is related to way of life and duties of an individual. The western concept of religion is based on personal way of worship.
Right from Indus Valley Culture Vedic period, epic age and early historical period, religion was an important institution having different ways and one of them was Varna system. It had also included 16 Sanskaras which were part of Indian life. Religion in India had included different types such as Jaina, Hindu, and Buddhist. The typology of religion further changed with different faiths and class emerged in India. Hindu religion was divided in S... and Vashta cult. Jainism as Swetamber and Digambar, Buddhism was also divided in three cults such as Hinayana, Mahayana and Thayana. These cults have been treated as very basic in each religion. These differences were based on philosophy and values of worship and belief. In the Satavahana period all three religions existed side by side. There was harmony in all the three religions and various cults prevailing in the period. The study of religion conditions in the period was conducted on the basis of evidences available for this study. Religion being a base of Indian life was playing a significant role in controlling social life. Religion and ethics had became an important aspect of public life in ancient India. The common people had both respect and fear in their minds about the institution of religion. Religion as an institution was based on a system of priests & monks. All these three found as balance of the religious system.

In this chapter different facets of religious beliefs have been discussed on the basis of various evidences. The exchange of symbols and motifs in the various cave temples revealed that there was a good deal of exchange of religious ideas in the period. The religious life of the period has been studied on the basis of religious texts and details available in Puranic literature. The Prakrit literature which is available on large scale also throws light on different faiths and modes of worship. The epigraphic evidences also throw light on socio religious conditions of the Satavahana period.

The religious life of the period revealed the various trends, modes of worship and changes in the religious system. It would be interesting to study the changing modes of various cults and Prathas. Protest against evils and conformity to the original was an important character of religions of the period. The study of religious life of the Satavahana period has been conducted in this chapter on the basis of available
records. There are both archeological and literary sources available in this period. When one type of source cannot specific, then other source can be used for this study.

By correlating various sources the total picture can be drawn and presented again. The rational use of source material has been made here to present the religious conditions. All these explorations are based on new sources and new analysis of old sources. The most significant aspect of Satavahanas religious sources is related to ethno cultural processes, which have been carefully observed and described here properly. The different divisions of this history were based on new perspective and new approach discussed here in this chapter.

*Literature is a means of social and cultural interactions. The entire spectrum can be viewed through the mirror of literature. In order to study the literary contribution of the period, the available data can be scrutinized and analyzed properly in the new angle. Anew perspective of sociology of literature can be very well illustrated here to look at the problem.*

*Religion was an important force of social identity during the ancient period. The Vedic tradition believed that religion constitutes society. Values, taboos and social milieus are strengthened due to religious Sanskaras. It has been pointed by V.A.Smith about unity in diversity in India that India beyond all doubt possesses a deep underlying fundamental unity far more profound than that produced either by geographical isolation or political suzerainty. That unity transcends the innumerable diversities of blood, color, language, dress, manners and sect.”*¹ The period of Satavahana in Deccan cannot be exception to this. K.C.Choudhari has observed that “Apart from the Vedas, Puranas, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Jains and the Buddhist religious texts contain many important historical materials.”² The history of Satavahanas is also based on literary sources like Aitarya Bramhanas.³ Unity in diversity was a great character of Indian society. It has been pointed that “Hindu period was not at all homogeneous in its traditions and cultural patterns.”⁴ This period both north and south India has been enriched by varied contributions leading towards diverse magnitude of cultural expressions. The sources of ancient Indian history are mostly socio religious. D.D.Kosambi has observed that “Ritual, philosophy, theology and poetry take up true
bulk of Sanskrit writings.” These writings contained fragments of Indian history, which has to be corroborated on the basis of archeological sources. In this chapter religious life during Satavahana period has been illustrated in a systematic manner.

Religious institutions in India have a continuous tradition throughout the ages. Both in North and South there was a close symmetry in the development of religious movements. Satavahana period was a period of the revival of the Vedic religion in the South India. They were catholic towards other local religions such as Buddhism and Jainism. The study of the religious conditions in South India can be very well conducted on the basis of available source material. All these sources have been earlier recorded by scholars, but now there can be new interpretations which have been discussed in this chapter. Religion was one of the major force in general and in the Satavahana period in particular. The references in Puranas as well as records in the inscriptions revealed that religious rituals were performed on large scale in the period. Every family was following a certain religious system and the Sanskaras were made through all these processes followed through religious manuscripts and their interpretations made by the priests of the respective religions. The social life was cordial enough to respect each other’s religious faiths and they had tolerant approach towards other religions. Religious harmony in the various faiths resulted into a positive approach of development and the social system became more wider and comprehensive for adjustments which led towards economic growth and prosperity. The inter caste and inter Varna marriages also prevailed in the period because the social life was cordial enough to tolerate such adjustments. It seems the social mobility was much higher and people were able to change their social and economic status on the basis of their positive performance. There was a scope for productivity and creativity because such creative talents were revered and respected in the contemporary religions of the period. The rewards system and incentives were also effective to appreciate talented works made by various social groups and individuals. In this chapter socio religious harmony has been studied. Throughout the three centuries same patterns of social behavior prevailed and there was very good connectivity between the top of the social structure and the last strata of the social structure. The elite class, middle class and the lower class has good deal of coordination because religious faiths were never an hurdle in the system. Women and
weaker sections were provided scope for development and there were many opportunities for them to seek higher goals of development. The Satavahana women can be described more respected, and more participatory as well as constructive in every walk of life. Aspects of social morality were based on highly developed religious values. Persons rising from backward classes were also able to perform well in Satavahana system because they were never insulted or looked down. On the contrary the religion provided them respect and pride responsible for development. There was a close symmetry in the urban and rural life because the Satavahana society had a well built net work of religious propagators which was responsible for peace, prosperity and development. The religious environment never promoted malice or hatred among the social groups. Reforms in the system were based on social dynamics and people’s grievances were heard both by rulers as well as religious heads.

Religion is one of the oldest social institutions in India. It has a long history from Indus Valley culture. The worship of Mother Goddesses as well as Pasupati Siva was in vogue from this period. Worship of God and Goddesses were offered. Puja, which was an age old tradition of religious faith. Vedic or Hindi religion was the oldest faith and in order to reform this religious system in 6th Century BC which was a protection against the evils. These evils were eroded and system was further improved. Buddhism and Jainism were two such religions, which had evolved to reform the age old traditional systems. In the process of culturalism the Aryans spread their religious ideas in entire South. In this process there was integration between Aryan and Non Aryans religions and there was a basis of Indian civilization. In this period all the three Indian religions Hindu, Buddhist and Jains prevailed and they were staying side by side. The most significant phenomenon of this period was that there existed cordial relationship between these three factions. A careful analysis of religious life in the period under discussion has been conducted in this chapter.

The religious details in the period can be studied on the basis of literacy as well as religious conditions. The relevant process also throws light on religious faiths and learning. Further cave temples, sculptural temples and ICONS of worship are also evidences of the period. S.P.Gupta has studied “B...process in ancient India. The Indian
society had a tradition of Varna system. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Varna and Shudra were four Varnas which later on were transformed into castes and sub castes. The life span of an individual was divided to four spans such as Bramacharya, Grahasthashram, Vanprasthashrum, and Sanyasm. There were four in types such as Arth, dharma, Kam and Moksha i.e. earning through profession, religious dedication and spiritual conquest in the life at the end.

All these aspects were corrected by Satavahana dynasty in their phase. The study of religious harmony in the period has been conducted in this chapter by making a critical analysis of all these traditions and the spectrum continued further in the period.

The religion as an institution grows when there is safety and security on political level. The Satavahanas provided strong political unity to the Deccan and that had led in to a strong center and having a moral support to the kingship. However, the Satavahana rulers were not rigid and strict in their religious theory. They had a tolerant approach to look at the religions. They had an equal edge to all of them and they had promoted Buddhism by supporting them on the basis of religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence. All these aspects have been carefully analyzed and properly recorded by conducting microscopic observations about the metamorphosis of socio religious system.

On this background it would be interesting to study religious conditions in the Satavahana period.

5.2. Religious conditions in Satavahana period:

The religious conditions in the pre Satavahana period were based on conservative and orthodox system. The stereotyped relations were prevailing in all the four Varnas and their sub sects. However their social settings in the Satavahana period thoroughly changed because the rulers themselves manifold forums between Kshtirya and Brahmins. The origin of Satavahana is not known and their lies the origin of all these mystical history. Their relationship with the symbols of Chariot which was vehicle of sun God Surya further elevates their status. The social and cultural ideology of Satavahanas’ history is based on their religious magnanimity. The Satavahanas social
life was controlled by religious systems and they were having cordial relations with each other. The social segments in the cross sections of society were having cordial relations:

- There was no bias or malice
- Each section was helping the other
- The aristocrats, artisans and lower classes were having effective relationship to develop a new society.

The various aspects of Satavahanas religious life can be explained here in a nutshell. The socio religious life of the period can be examined on the basis of various sources. Each religious faith and cult can be examined on the basis of various evidences literary as well as archeological. The study of religious conditions of the period can be useful to understand specific background for the detailed study of art and architecture:

- Religious conditions can explain about peace and security of the period.
- Religious conditions can illustrate about exchange of ideas and systems of the period.
- The study of religious conditions can illustrate different dimensions of social life, beliefs, faiths and values.
- The study of religion as a cultural phenomenon can help to examine the value of festivals, songs and dances.
- The entire span of religious life illustrates harmony of the period.

All these aspects are very much significant to highlight the religious faiths and beliefs of the period. The Satavahana period witnessed many changes in the religious life. The exchange of ideas between these main religious rightly illustrates about social peace and harmony. The study of Satavahanas religious life truly manifests social faith which was witnessed on the basis of philosophy of worship and the exchange of values. The entire process has been minutely observed for examining the distinct social conditions of the period. The use of Prakrit language instead of Sanskrit language was a significant phenomenon because the philosophy was taken to people through the popular mass
language as a vehicle of exchange of ideas. The Hala’s Gatha Shaptashati and Gunadhiya’s Brahat Katha Kosh also provide some details about the religious faiths and trends in a significant manner. All these aspects have been explained here.

During the Satavahana period, both Hinduism and Buddhism spread rapidly. The Satavahana rulers were the followers of Brahmanism. They performed Aswamedha Yajnas and gave donations to Brahmanas. Indra, Surya (The Sun God), Chandra, (the Moon God), Vasudeva, Krishna, Pasupati and Gauri etc. were various Gods and Goddesses worshipped by the people. Shaivism and Vaishnavism were most popular form of Hinduism. Beautiful temples were built. The Brahmans occupied the highest position in the society.

The Satavahana kings were Brahmanas but they showed tolerance towards other faiths such as to Buddhism as well. They gave similar donations to Buddhism as they did for the Hinduism. Consequently, Buddhism too spread in this period. At many places, the Buddhist caves, chaityas and stupas were built.

Almost all the caves in the south belonged to the Buddhists. Sometimes, grants of land were made for the maintenance of these chaityas, viharas and stupas as well as for the monks or bhikshus. In this period, there were several sects of Buddhism in the south and various classes of monks were always busy to preach the Buddhist doctrines.

One significant development of this period was the admission of the foreign races of the Sakas, Greeks, Kushans and Abhiras to the folds of Hinduism or Buddhism. They became an integral part of the Indian society. They were quite tolerant and exchanged gifts on religious festivals and other occasions.

Thus it is clear that the religious conditions in the Satavahana period were very positive and there was peace and cohesion among three major religions, Vedic, Buddhist and Jain. The religious practices were conducting moderate and they were not fanatic. The religious institutions were based on very high principles of modesty. The essence of religious teachings among all the three major religions was thus based on character building, Attempts were made to foster ethical values and code of ethics was
adhered by preachers and followers of religion. The study of inter religious connectivity can be conducted on the basis of literary and archeological sources. Instances can be recorded through Gunadhya’s Brahata Katha and Hala’s Gatha Saptashati. About religious conditions of the period following five features can be noted:

* Cordial relations existed between Hindus and Buddhists. In many Buddhists texts references occurred regarding Buddhist community staying in Paithan, the capital city of Satavahana.

* In Satakarni-I had minted some coins bearing Srivatsa mark of Jain religion which shows their cordial approach towards Jainism.

* Temples of Jain Tirthankaras like Chandrabrabhu was existing in Pratisthan, which has been recorded by early medieval poet like Chimna Pandit, which is a testimony of inter religious harmony.

* The trade guilds and corporate were helping crossing their own religion. They had an open approach towards constructive works conducted by any religious section of the society.

* The Naneghat inscriptions of the Satavahana period has recorded the bravery of the dynasty. They also respected the social support engineered by them from various social groups and religious groups which were providing them positive energy to rule the society.

Thus all these salient features of the religious life revealed that their approach towards all the religions was equal. Sarwabhuti Samtrishti, i.e. equal approach to all religions was their guiding force which led towards positive change in the society.

5.3. Religious harmony:

The various examples of religions of religious history revealed that there was a significant change in social system. The various classes were having healthy relationship and they were working in tune with each other for better and and public progress in the period.
All these aspects can be very well studied on the basis of social and religious exchanges witnessed in the period. The epigraphic evidences are testimony of the same. The Hindu, Buddhists and Jaina the three major religions were having good deal of exchanges which were a sign of cordial relationship.

In the ancient Indian period Satavahana society was leading peaceful and harmonious life. The different social groups were leaving together with peace and affection. All these social groups had a good deal of social unity and integrity. The social harmony and peace was attained by the people by making serious efforts.

The harmony in social life has been debated and discussed by number of scholars and historians. In nutshell these works can be summarized properly here in this part.

There was a good deal of cohesion in all the three religions of India i.e. Vedic, Buddhist and Jain. About Satavahana period R.S.Tripathi has observed that “Both Brahmanism and Buddhism prospered under the tolerant rule of the Satavahanas. This is evident on the basis of epigraphic as well as archeological sources. About peaceful coexistence of these religions, it has been observed that “The most popular religions at that time were Hinduism and Buddhism. The different religious sects coexisted with each other and their mutual religions were based on tolerance.” Religious systems and organizations were not rigid but flexible in the Deccan at the time. It has been observed that “Both Hinduism and Buddhism drew large converts from amongst foreigners, which proves the liberal religious spirit of the age.” It seems during this period due to such approach Vedic religion flourished and it could get supporters both from within and outside the country. It is true that “The Satavahana rulers were also tolerant towards all faiths. All of them followed Hinduism, yet protected all other sects and gave them liberal grants of money and land.” Due to such policy religious preachers and followers were coexisting together without feeling of malice and hatred. K.C.Choudhari has observed that “The Satavahana period is characterized by a unique spirit of toleration in matters of religious beliefs. The Satavahana rulers were Brahmanal Hindus who relied on the Vedas and Hindu Dharmaashastra. They held Asvamedha, Rajasuya and many other sacrifices. But they seem to have been eclectic
in their religious beliefs.” 10 The study of their convictions and beliefs show that they were worshiping major Vedic gods and goddesses in their period. It has been observed that “The Satavahana kings worshipped a variety of Hindu gods and goddesses. In the Saptasati of King Hala there is mention of the worship of gods and goddesses like Siva, Krishna, Indra, Gauri etc. ” 11 About their approach towards Buddhism it has been noted that “They tolerated and actively patronized Buddhism which flourished without any hindrance throughout the Satavahana period.” 12 This is evident on the basis of historical sources of the period.

The Satavahana period was a significant period of religious harmony as well as cultural prosperity. The effluence of art and architecture as well as literatures was an important phenomenon of the period. There was political stability and cordial social environment, which was responsible for the development of art and architecture in the period.

Though Satavahana rulers were followers of Vedic religion, yet they were competent enough to support Buddhism and Jainism in the state. The centers like Paithan, Nagarjunkonda and Vijaywada were flourishing Buddhist centers of learning. Arjunan Pillai has observed that “As early as 200 BC Buddhism began to spread in Andhradesa. 13 There is a story that the Buddha had visited Andhra Country. 14 It is further stated that “The Kolhapur stupa has yielded a stone box and relic casket on the square lid of which contains an inscription cut in pres-Mauryan characters.” 15

The study of Buddhist religion and culture in the Satavahana period brings us to point of consideration that the social transformation was basic enough which lead to economic prosperity. The socio economic prosperity and political stability was closely related to each other.

The different aspects of cultural life have been unfolded in a systematic manner. The role, relevance and effectivity of the cultural diversity can be studied on the basis of literary as well as archeological sources.
The Naneghat inscription of Gautami Badami describes the glory and prosperity of the Satavahana state. Their velour and bravery was supported by their generals and soldiers.

The Buddhist art, architecture and literature during the period developed in tune with each other in a systematic manner. If we study all these aspects by examining the authentic sources, they can throw light on numerous known and unknown facts.

It has been further stated by Pillai that “The Satavahanas were not devoid of artistic and literary taste. Under their liberal patronage a large number of Buddhist stupas, chaityas and shrines were constructed in the various parts of the Deccan.” This can be amply illustrated on the basis of Buddhist caves in western India. It has further been observed that “Some of the earliest specimen of sculptural art can be seen in the Krishna Godavari delta, Amravati and other places”. This reveals masterpieces of Buddhist sculpture. Amita Ray has written a book on Aurangabad Buddhist Caves, and she has described some of the images as masterpieces of Satavahana art.

The sources are ample and varied what required is correlation and coordination of sources for describing the religious conditions of the period.

5.4. Literary and archeological sources:

The various literary and archeological sources bespeak about the religious harmony of the period. All these aspects revealed the following facts:

- The society was healthy enough to follow cordial relationship.
- The good deal of exchanges were evident from the sources

The Satavahana period was rich in source material and there were various sources available on large scale. Especially literary and archeological sources loom large while rebuilding religious life there is a need to examine these sources effectively. The entire process can be rightly studied in new angle. The literary and archeological sources bespeak about religion and cultural life. The religious factors of the period were interwoven with cultural life.
Of the Satavahana kings, Hala (r.20-24 CE) is famous for compiling the collection of Maharashtri poems known as the Gaha Sattasai (Sanskrit: Gatha Saptashati) although from linguistic evidence it seems that the work now extant must have been reedited in the succeeding century or two. The Lilavati describes his marriage with Ceylonese Princess.

The Satavahanas influenced South East Asia to a great extent, spreading Hindu culture, language and religion into that part of the world. Their coins had images of ships.

The extension of Indian influence on the entire east and western parts of the world was possible due to new social upliftment. The socio cultural aspects of life will related to each other and they were having an edge over other parts of the Indian subcontinent. Here the study of social and religious life has been possible due to proper understanding of source material in a new angle.

The literary sources are available on large scale, which are evident to reveal the manifold progress of the period. It has been observed that “The Satavahana monarchs patronized the Prakrit language. It appears that Maharashtri Prakrit was their official language at least for a considerable period.”

King Hala’s Gatha Saptashati and Gunadhya’s Brahatkatha was the best specimen of literary sources of Satavahana period. Pillai has observed that theme of Gatha Saptashati is drawn from rural life but the presentation is satisfying to refined taste. The study of cultural life cannot be described and documented without the examination of source material. All the three literary, archeological and foreign accounts can help a great deal to support these facts in a systematic manner. All these sources can help to draw a more correct and more objective sides about the cultural life.

The excavation reports of Paithan, Bhokardhan and Ter as well as Kolhapur throw a light on the religious and cultural life of the period. The images developed by the artists of the Satavahana period on the Stupa of Sanchi reveal that the micro art work was conducted by them with great devotion. They were implied as experts to work at Sanchi. The artists of Bhokardhan who were working on ivory had executed in many
ways regarding their quality of art work. The Buddhist caves at Nasik, Rajtadag as well as at Karle near Bombay revealed the perfection and relevance of the Buddhist art work, which is a testimony of religious harmony and exchange of symbols.

Hence it would be illogical to say that the progress of literature under the Satavahanas was slow. The sources of the Satavahana period loom large and they manifest coexistence of different religions together in a systematic manner. A.C.Banerjee has observed that Gautamiputra Satkarni was that “In contemporary inscription he is described as a social reformer.” Due to Satavahanas liberal social policy, inter-Verna and inter caste marriages were possible and there was no barrier for achieving social progress. This can be testified on the basis of literary as well as archeological sources.

On the basis of these sources, Jaypalan has observed that “Satavahanas were staunch followers of Vedic religion. Rulers like Satakarni I performed two Asvamedha sacrifices and one Rajasuya sacrifice. This shows how political power was gaining religious sanctions. Further it is true that the above mentioned Hala’s Gatha saptashati deals with the stores of Krishna. Buddhism also enjoyed equal patronage.” The availability of Jain temples in the Paithan city also reveals that all the three religions were staying side by side in the Satavahana period.

5.5. Spread of Vedic religion

The Satavahana rulers were father of Hindu religion and they were able to support the other two religions Buddhism and Janism. All these aspects can be studied on the basis of different sources. The entire western India was under Satavahanas and they were controlling a great deal in the period. The entire Satavahana period was highly influenced by the Vedic philosophy.

The important highlights of Vedic religion can be noted below:

Majumdar R.K. and A.N.Srivastva, have rightly observed that p-363 “The religious notions, during the Satavahana period were quite considerate and tolerant. All
the kings of this dynasty had devout faith in Brahmanism but these kings on no occasion did tyrannize the people belonging to other religions”  

“Satavahanas were followers of Brahmanical or Vedic religion. They were catholic enough to support Buddhism and Jainism equally under their reign.

Majumdar and Srivastava have further observed that “During their period Buddhism also flourished. The Saiva religion rose impetuously along with the Vaishnava and Vedic religions. Megasthnes has given a description of the unfaltering and devoted worshippers of Lord Krishna. Coming frequently of the names like Gopal, Vishnu Datta, Mahadevanka Shivdatta, Shivghosha, Shivpalita and Shivghuti etc. in the inscriptions of Satavahana period.” This shows that Vaishnism was most effective among all the Vedic cults.

Dr. Bhandarkar has opined that Saiva and Vishnava religions were more popular in the south of India. Dr. Bhandarkar is of the view that in the south Saiva religion was more popular than the Vishnava religion. And undoubtedly, it seems to be quite true and plausible as Ganesh and snake worship was in practice. They worshipped Nandi, the vehicle of Lord Shiva, Names like, Naga, Sarpa, Sarpit, etc. are in fact testimony to the snake worship. The Satavahana or Andhrs) Thus all these trends reveal the contemporary period of Satavahanas.

The embracing of the Hindu religion by clans like Sakas, Yavanas, and Pahalavas etc. marked an event of great religious importance during the Andhra period. As has been pointed out earlier, these races already had amalgamated with Kshatriyas. This shows wide and comprehensive approach of the Hindu religion.

It has further pointed that “The Dharmacharyas have also conceded to the fat. The various inscriptions of this time hold a testimony to the fact that Hinduism was embraced by too many exotic people and a few counted people had to change their names. The aliens of the distant land entering the circle of Hindu religion, places before us a glowing example of the religious consciousness, as well as of the tolerance and good will among the ardent exponents of various religions.” This shows how Satavahanas enhanced the periphery of Vedic religion due to their liberal policies.
As regards the religious condition of the people, Mahajan has observed that “both Hinduism and Buddhism flourished side by side. The Satavahana kings were Brahmans and they performed many sacrifices. A reference to the Naneghat inscription of Nayanika gives us an idea of the various kinds of sacrifices which were performed at that time. We are told that Satakarni I performed two Asvamedha sacrifices and one Rajasuya sacrifice.”

Satkarni-I is said to have performed sacrifices like Agnyadheya, anvarambhaniya, Gavamayana, Angirasatiratra, aptoryama, anirasaamayana, Gargatiratra, Chhandogapavaman-atiratra, Trayodasaratra, Dasaratra, etc. Not only sacrifices were performed, a lot of money was given to the Brahmans as Dakshina. In one case, 42,700 cows, 10 elephants, 1,000 horses, 17 silver pots, one horse chariot and 68,000 Karshapanas were given as Dakshina. Sometimes dakshina was given in the form of villages. Thus it seems the learned class was supported by Satavahana kings for their scholarship. There are some inscriptions which reveal Agrahara donations given to the scholarly persons for persuading scholarship.

The Satavahana kings worshipped Samkarshana, Vasudeva, Indra, the Sun and the Moon. The Saptasati of King Hala refers to the worship of India, Krishna, Pasupati and Gauri. The mention of such names as Sivapalita, Sivakhadita, Sivadatta, Kumara, etc. point towards the worship of Siva and Skanda. Likewise, the worship of Vishnu can be established from the mention of such names as vishnupalit, Venhu and Lachinika. In the Saptasati, Hari or trivikrama is said to be superior to other gods. This is evident to understand various trends of worship in the Satavahana period.

According to Dr. D.R. Bhandarkar, “Such names as Bhutapala, Mahadevanka, sivadatta, Sivaghosha, Sivapalita, Sivabhuti, Sivadata, Bhavagopa and so forth clearly show that this god was popularly worshipped under four names, viz., Siva, Mahadeva, Bhava and Bhutapala. That his vehicle, the bull, was also adored may be seen from the names, Nandin, Rishavanaka and Rishvadata. The names Skandapalita, Sivaskandila, and Siva Skandagupta show that the god skanda was worshipped both separately and conjointly with Siva. Such names as Naga, Sarpa and Sarpila point to the prevalence of serpent worship.” The observation made by Bhandarkar is very clear to illustrate
various trends and currents of Shiva worship which was prominent in the period of Satavahanas.

Thus all these discussions clearly reveal that the religious policy of Satavahanas was wide, tolerant and liberal. Though they were followers of Vedic religion yet they were supporting other two religions, i.e. Buddhism and Jainism due to their liberal policy, many invaders were included in Vedic religion. Especially Kshetriya clan became more powerful due to this policy of assimilation.

5.6. Buddhism in Satavahana period.

In western Deccan Buddhism had spread all the over the western Deccan. There were two phases Hinayana and Mahayana. Especially Paithan or Pratisthan was itself a center of Buddhist learning. In the second phase Buddhism spread more rapidly from Nasik, the northern Maharashtra center to Vishakhapatnam and Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh. Nagarjunkonda was a center of Buddhist learning in Andhra Pradesh and it had number of other sub centers of Buddhist learning. In the entire western India more than 450 Buddhist caves were carved during the Satavahana period and this can be closely examined on the basis of art, architecture and iconography which was well developed in the Satavahana period. The Buddhist caves were divided in two major types Chitiyas and Viharas. One was a symbol of image worship and the other was an arrangement based on Sangham centers for Buddhist monks to stay them in rainy seasons. They were also known as Sangham places for resting of monks during rainy season known as center of viharas, where they stay during heavy rains. The systematic approach of Satavahana rulers which was tolerant and catholic can be observed on the basis of these cave temples. Junnar was a largest Buddhist settlement and it was having more than 150 caves. The study of Buddhist caves in western India in general and Maharashtra in particular reveals the wide and all inclusive approach of Satavahana rulers. Their entire method of tolerance was based on royal support and patronage to these cave temples which were centers of religious worship and dedication which was a symbol of human values of high magnitude. This can be clearly witnessed in these cave temples.
Buddhism spread a great deal due to Satavahanas tolerant policy. In this period the capital city Pratishthan was also a strong center of learning.‌ 34 About spread of Buddhism in the Satavahana period Mahajan observed that “Buddhism made a lot of progress on account of the policy of religious toleration followed by the Satavahana kings. Satavahana kings gave as much help to Buddhism as they did to Hinduism. No wonder, Buddhism flourished throughout the Satavahana period.” 35 This can be shown on the basis of cave temples and Stupas constructed during the period. The caves at Rajtaag (Aurangabad), cave temples at Junnar today locally known as Lenadri caves and Nasik caves illustrate about widespread existence of Buddhism in the Satavahana period. At Junnar in Pune district there are more than 156 caves which can be described as largest Buddhist settlement in Western India, shows how Buddhist church was well organized and well built. The monks were travelling safely and propagating religion fearlessly throughout the state. In the hot sun and rainy season the monks were taking rest in these caves temples and had a tremendous interlink and connectivity for fostering Buddhist philosophy and moral values in the masses.

The study of inter religious cohesion between Hindu, Buddhist as well as jain can also be testified on the basis of exchange of symbols, which can be witnessed in the Buddhist as well as Brahmanical caves. A study of Buddhism as a religion and as a well developed faith has been conducted number of scholars like Devanggana Desai, R.S.Gupte, and Nagaraju, which illustrates how Buddhist cave temples were constructed on ancient caravan routes as well as on the trading points which were feasible for exchange of tourist activities. The Chinese as well as western travelers have recorded cities like Paithan, Bhogwardhan and Tagarpur, both as a trading center and center for religious worships. Earlier Hinayana Buddhism had some influence, but later on in the Mahayana period, Buddhism further penetrated in the western Deccan on large scale. The existence of Buddhist viharas in the capital city of Pratishthan, is a testimony of catholicity and tolerance of central power. The study of Buddhist remains in Paithan was conducted recently by Prof. V.L.Dharurkar and Sanjay Paikrao has illustrated three interesting facts:
* The Buddhist literary works provide minute details of Buddhist Sanghas active in the Paithan city.

* Large scale Chaityas and Viharas were conducted in central Deccan.

* Rich endowments recorded by Shresties and trade guilds for the construction of Rajtadag caves which are 25 kms away from Paithan, revealed the royal support provided to Buddhism by Satavahana rulers.

However, furthermore there are no instances of harassment of Buddhist people by majority community, which is also a significant character of social life. This can be further studied on the basis of largely documented Buddhist caves temples in the western Deccan during Satavahana period.

The study of Buddhism as a religion in Satavahana period requires further more explorations for documentation and interpretation of inter religious exchanges which was the important character of the period under discussion.

5.7. Buddhist cave temples

In the Satavahana period Buddhist caves were scooped out on large scale. The nexus of this activity was Buddha and his philosophy. The study of Buddhist caves during the Satavahana period and throw light on various neglected aspects. Huge donations were given by strities and shrinis for erecting of these caves. The following aspects can be highlighted here:

- The Buddhist caves were centers of learning and centers of social gathering.
- Exchange of values and ideas was possible due to large scale intervals of cultural symbols during the period.
- The Vedic or Bramical religion was cordial to Buddhist and Jaina religions and all the three were staying together with peace and harmony.
- The entire socio cultural life developed in the temple caves was based on human values and ideals.
- The most of the caves were scooped on the basis of public demands and support by traders and business persons who were aware of social responsibility.
• The simple values and ideas of Buddhist religion had a wide approval towards the new values, created by Buddhist monks.

The study of Buddhist cave centers help to throw light on everyday life of the period. The study of all the different aspects of the period can help us to arrive at a correct focus about the religious harmony and cohesion that existed during the period.

Cave temples were constructed during Satavahana period. V.D.Mahajan has observed that “Almost all the caves so far found in the Deccan are dedicated to Buddhism and they were all excavated during the Satavahana period. These Buddhist caves were of two kinds, Chaityagrihas or temples and Layanas or residential quarters for Bhikshus.” (36) Chaityas were treated as means of symbol worship and Viharas were also known as Sangaram where Buddhist Sangas were taking rest. Dr. R.S.Gupte has pointed that “More than 450 Buddhist caves in western Deccan in general and Maharashtra in Particular is available le on large scale for public worship. 37 All these caves amply testify the occurrence of Buddhist art and architecture on large scale in Satavahana period.

About characteristics of Buddhist art, VD Mahajan has observed that “ The Chaityagrihas had vaulted roofs and horseshoe shaped windows over the entrance. They also had interiors consisting of a nave and side aisles with a small stupa at the inner circular end. A Layana consists of a hall surrounded by a number of cells, each cell containing a stone-bench for a monk to sleep on. One or two rock-cist cisterns were attached to every Layana. The repairs of caves, villages were generally donated.” 38 In the Satavahana period Buddhist cave temples were constructed out of donations given by Shrsresties or trade gilds which were just like modern corporate industries. In one of the inscriptions at Kanheri caves, reference appears regarding donation made by Shreties for the construction of Buddhist Chaitya at Rajtadag today’s Aurangabad. 39 Ranade has further pointed that the scriptural are of Satavahana was ornamental and having rhythm in the presentations. 40 Further he has noted that there might be a royal dancer in the court of Satavahanas whose replica is portrayed on the walls of Rajtadag caves as a dancing panel like orchestra having band musical instruments presented
together. This shows how dance along with classical music was developed and trained in the Satavahana period.  

The progress of Buddhism is shown by the presence of the Buddhist caves and epigraphs at Pitalkhora, Nasik, Bhaja, Bedsa, Kondane and Kuda and the Buddhist Stupas at Bhattiprolu, Amravati, goli, Ghantasala and Gummadidurru. Not only did the Satavahana kings encourage Buddhism, the royal example was followed by feudatories, officials, merchants, craftsmen and women. It appears that there was some sort of a competition among them to establish more and more caves and Viharas for the Buddhists.”  

Dr. R.S.Gupte has studied these caves in western India. Junnar is one of the largest settlements of Buddhist people which show four groups of caves.  

In Buddhism Buddha Dhamma and Sangha were three great institutions. Bikus were propagators of religion. They were doing selfless service to the society. For their dedication and devotion and sacrifice Mahajan has observed that “For the feeding of Bhikshus, sometimes pieces of land were given and sometimes cash endowments were made. Very often, this money was deposited in the guilds. The Bhikshus occupied the caves only during the rainy season and for the rest of the year they were on their tours.”  

The cave temples were the places of rest during hot season and heavy rains rainy season. The disciples were coming there with great numbers for seeking gospel in these Viharas. In some cases some special arrangement was also made.  

Mahajan has observed that “It appears that certain caves were reserved for certain sects of the Buddhist monks. A cave at Nasik was reserved for the Bhadrayana Bhikshu Samgha. A cave at Carle was reserved for the Mahasamghikas.”  

This is evident how special care was taken to protect the interest of selfless religious propagators.  

Romila Taper has observed that “The Satavahanas were the initial transmitters of goods and ideas from one to the other.”  

In the field of art also Satavahanas were able translate their ideas into reality with great sincere efforts.  

V.D. Mahajan has rightly observed that “The Satavahana period is famous for its great contribution to Indian art. Numerous sites in Andhra like-Goli, Jaggayapata, Bhattiprolu, Ghantasala, Amravati and Nagarjunakonda have revealed the remains of
stupas and sculptures of this period. The glory of Satavahanas is reflected through these remains.

According to Chaurasia “Many of the Buddhist caves in the Deccan were excavated during the period and they bear witness at one to the piety of their builders and the infinite patience and high level of artistic skill possessed by the architects of the times. These institutions were maintained by grants of lands and villages as well as by the investment of funds in the craft guilds.” This shows a close link between economic support and artistic glory.

It has been observed that “There were guilds of potters, weavers, oil pressers, corn dealers, bamboo workers etc. The guilds acted as banks receiving deposits at stipulated rates of interest.” These were contributing for the development of art and architecture.

Amravati was a flourishing center of art. It has been observed that “The stupas of Amravati are the largest and most interesting. The drum of the stupa was 20 feet high with its four rectangular offsets. It was surrounded by a railing 192 feet in diameter and 600 feet in circumstance. It was 13 or 14 feet high above the payment. The railing outside enclosed the Pradakshinapath of about 15 feet wide, “having free standing pillars at intervals bearing miniature stupas or similar symbols as their capitals.(49) Thus Amravati stupa was unique in character. Sir John Marshall has described it as “there is greater originality, freedom of treatment, spontaneous exuberance in the art of Amravati…. The reliefs of Amravati indeed appear to be as truly Indian in style as those of Bharhut and Ellora. They followed as a natural sequence on the Mauryan art, when that is was finding expression in more conventionalized forms. They have inherited certain motifs and types which filtered from the North-west but these elements have been completely absorbed and assimilated without materially influencing the indigenous character of the sculptures”. Thus the greatness of Amravati became evident in the Satavahana period both in art, architecture and sculptures.

According to B.C. Sen, “Female figures with slim waists and a symmetrical arrangement of physical beauties, loosely dressed with garments of fine texture, full of softness of a slender creeper and inviting gracefulness, deeply sensitive of the luxuries
of nature, sometimes playing upon musical instruments in beautifully artistic poses, rather a little coquettish, they are found in the company of young men who seem to possess keen powers of appreciation. If we have eyes to see per chance, we may catch a glimpse of the exchange of significant looks passing between a maid in the corner and her lover in the opposite side giving flushes of sensuous suggestion which are not easy to miss.” 51 Thus the glory of Amravati has been appreciated by art critics for their aesthetic sense. It has been observed that

V.D. Mahajan has further observed that “The Amravati school “struck a quite novel and unique chord in the symphony of Indian plastic art. In the achievement of pure form in all its elegant modulation, in the subtle delineation of the elusive moods and sentiments of human heart and in the picturesque representation of the vibrations of the stirring soul, it stands unrivalled”. 52 Thus amplifies how art was developed in a systematic manner to manifest social milieu and cultural ethos of the period.

Cave temples were not only centers of worship, they were also centers of religious education. It seems a center of learning at Nagarjunkonda, which was a Buddhist University of south India in the Satavahana period. The Buddhist art centers and educational centers had a all India connectivity. The scholars from Nalanda and Taxisheela used to visit Deccan and scholars from south India were visiting North India. This kind of upward mobility shows that south Indian Buddhism was equally having respect and status in the Pan India Buddhist activities. To erect well developed cave temples was a gigantic task acquiring land, selecting rocks and scooping of the caves was a continuous process which was not possible without royal support. The renovation of religion is possible only when political benevolence is respected and equally practiced in a systematic manner. The study of Buddhist art in the Satavahana period, brings two more facts to the light. One among those is well organized artists bands in the Satavahana domain and secondly cross political support generated by heads of Buddhist religion for benevolence welfare works. Buddhism received a great Philip even more better than Vakataka and Chalukya period, because, the Satavahana rulers were not making any difference on the basis of religious followers in their communities.

5.8. Jain remains
In the Satavahana period the role played by Jaina religion was significant. Hence not much light is thrown on these Jaina contributions. In the city Paithan, capital of Satavahana there were three temples donated to Jaina Tirthankaras:

- Jainism was an religion of culture and it was a well developed systems.
- The Jaina studies of Satavahana period have shown that the Jaina influence was not meager and limited.
- The cultural awareness of Jaina religion was profound because this was based on non Vedic traditions. The study of Jaina reveals in the Satavahana period show that this religion was third in the influential status. The entire process can be very well studied to understand the religious awareness during the period. Though Jain community was limited but it had suitable influence on the mainstream religion, because the religion was followed by trading community in the Satavahana period. Hence the Satavahana period was mainly responsible for the existence of Jaina religion which had influenced the Vedic way of life both enriching each other. Hence the study of inscriptions and Jaina remains can throw more light on the subject concerned.

In the Satavahana period the remains of Jain temples also show how Jainism developed side by side. King Satkarni-I was having Srivatsa marks on his coins, which shows his favor towards Jainism.\(^{53}\) The study of Paithan Jain remains has revealed that there were temples of all 24 Thirthankaras of the town. The poet Chimna Pandit of 13\(^{th}\) century has described that there existed a temple of Chandraprabhu a Jain tirthankaras.

Dr. S.B.Deo in his book “Jain Monestism” has observed that Jain influence in the Satavahana period was meager.\(^ {54}\) However, this cannot be accepted because good deal of Jain remains existed in the Satavahana period. The remains of temples, literature, as well as local legends amply testify this. Thus it would be interesting to observe that Jain religion and culture stayed side by side in the Satavahana period.

Jainism was closely similar to Buddhism in cannons and philosophy. But Jain strictly adhered to their principles and bit rigid and dogmatic in their practices. Though they remained in isolation, yet they had good deal of respect in the society. Their
conservative approach looks rather puritan and conservative in nature, but in the long run this benefited them to survive even in the negative situation. Jaina along with their existence in Maharashtra and Karnataka had penetrated in Tamil Naudu and Kerala in this period. The Jain Agma literature was mostly produced in local languages and it led to the growth of Jain Maharashtri Prakrit in the period, which later on continued in the Rastrakuta Yadava period. However, the reach of Jain temples requires further more attention. Prof. V.L. Dharurkar had searched the remains of Jain temples at Kakequar in Omerga tahsil of Osmanabad district. (IAR 1979-80) The search of Jain remains in the Satavahana period can be explored more rigorously in the future course of time. The study of Jain literature, Jain manuscripts and Jain temples, as well as sculptures can bring to our notice some new facts about peaceful coexistence of three major religious faiths in the Satavahana period. A. Ghosh in his volumes Jain Art and Architecture has also thrown light on Jain remains in the Satavahana period in Khandesh, Marathwada and Vidarbha regions of Maharashtra.

5.9. Critical study of religious life

The religious life of the Satavahana period was full of different aspects which can be described as unity in diversity. The different dimensions of religious life during the Satavahana period revealed the following three key aspects:

- The Satavahana society was following principle of religious harmony and they were equally respecting each other’s religious faiths.
- The entire study was based on the theory of unity in diversity and they were respecting each other’s religious feelings.
- The entire socio economic program was based on religious posterity which was responsible for import in productivity on large scale.
- The social system in the Satavahana period was based on principle of equality. In Sanskrit language this was conceptualized as Sarvabhuuti, Samdrini i.e. equality to all. The entire process can be recorded and recasted here to throw
light on various angles of social life. The Hindus, Buddhist and Jaina were living
together in a better way. This manifests all these ideas together.

In this chapter study of harmony in the religious life was specially focused a
thorough survey of all the three religions Hindu, Buddhist and Jain was undertaken and
a new light was thrown on Buddhism as well as Jainism. Churasia has observed that
“As regards the state of religion we learn that both Brahmanism and Buddhism
flourished side by side. The Andhra Kings were Brahmanical Hindus but it is noteworthy
that most of their recorded donations were made to Buddhist institutions. Princes and
even ordinary citizens vied with one another in founding asylum and rest houses for the
Buddhist Bhikshus.” 55 Thus, social peace was possible due to religious harmony, which
led to all-round progress and development.

In the Satavahana period Vedic religion had well developed in a systematic manner.
Chaurasia has observed that “Hinduism was also very popular and the worship of Shiva
and Vasudeva being wide spread amongst the people.” 56 It shows both Shivism and
Vashivinism was staying side by side in cohesion to each other. It has been noted that
“Foreigners like Sakas and the Abhiras readily embraced Hinduism probably due to its
popularity and state patronage. “ 57 This all inclusive and liberal policy of Satavahanas
was responsible for social peace and harmony. Different religions peacefully coexisted
with each other at one hand and different cults among them equally were staying
together with peace and stability. There were no incidence of religious clashes, malice
and hatred in the Satavahana period, which can be observed on the basis of
inscriptions as well as literary sources. Raychoudhary has observed that “The art of any
country represents the longing of the soul of people to express its intuitive experience in
color, form and sound like sculptures of Amravati of the period.” 68 Thus in the
Satavahana period religious harmony was very basic and that provided an impetus for
the growth of art, architecture and literature. It also developed work culture in the period.
Further this has benefitted not only for development of art but also for the economic
prosperity of the period. The religious harmony in the period had three direct benefits
which can be noted below:
Due to inter religious harmony there remained peace coexistence in the society which lead to economic prosperity. It also developed religious positivity leading towards the development of productivity and new work culture, which was unique in the period.

The religious harmony enhanced growth in the field of literature. Vedic, Buddhist and Jain literature flourished in the local languages such as Marathi and Kannada as well as Telugu. The literary works of Satavahana period were classic in nature. They were not in the divine Sanskrit languages but mostly they were in the Prakrit or Paishachi language, which shows people’s participation in the creative revolution.

The religious harmony had transformed into artistic activity because glory in architecture is based on people’s participation. The superb Buddhist cave temples and master pieces in their works revealed the artistic achievements of Satavahana period. The famous dancing panel in Aurangabad caves is a best example of such achievements. The study of religious harmony which prevailed in the Satavahana period can be illustrated not only through coins, inscriptions and cave temple, but also through literary works. Buddhist, Jain and Hindu literature, amply testifies interreligious exchanges as and cordial relationship in various social segments. The root cause behind this success was the royal approach of Satavahana rulers. They never became a party in the religious struggle. On the contrary they persuaded all religions to stay together for peaceful progress and development. The social dynamics in the religious harmony can be examined in a systematic manner for critical analysis of all forces engaged in the historical development.

5.10. Benefits of religious harmony:

The Satavahana period witnessed socio religious harmony among various social groups. All these social groups had a good deal of understanding among each other. The religious harmony led to social assimilation. The following benefits of religious harmony in the Satavahana period can be noted as below:
Due to religious harmony the various social groups were cordial to each other and they had developed a constructive approach for the total upliftment of social and cultural life.

The religious harmony had led to positivity. This positivity had enhanced the productivity of the period. The various guilds and Srenis were of high caliber. Due to mass involvement the feeling of belonging had intensive.

The entire Satavahana period was having peace and security in social life. The religious harmony was mainly responsible for this change.

The religious harmony led to the effluence of creativity. The creative force had reflected into quality productivity. The development in various fields such as dance, paintings and textile witnessed a tremendous change in the period.

The Satavahana period had developed a unique textile product known as “Paithani”. The saris were of very high quality and they had illustrated gold and silver threads. This has been possible due to quality in art work and their products.

The Satavahana period had witnessed positive development in coins and coinage. The royal system had developed quality mints. In the period gold and silver coins were developed and they were effective in the market.

The positive religious harmony led to the growth of trade and commerce. The credible and responsible economic transformations were based on confidence in each other. The religious trust and confidence was responsible for healthy economic relations in the period.

The religious harmony was responsible for cultural transformation. The people at large had a tremendous fanatism towards creative reflections. Quality literature in folk language was produced in Prakrit languages. Both rulers as well as creative workers worked hand in hand.

The development in the field of art and architecture was possible due to religious harmony. Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina religious groups were cordial to each other. The development of Buddhist cave temples were possible due to donations made by non Buddhists trade organizations.
• The religious peace and cooperation among each other had led to new creative revolution. The entire period witnessed a good deal of cooperation among each other leading towards the effluence of art and architecture.

A critical study of all these aspects revealed that the religious positivity was responsible for all round development in the Satavahana period. The religious harmony had further led to cumulative effect of overall development in the period. The religious harmony led to the social and economic development and it has further lead towards the cultural development of the period.

In nutshell it can be stated that the cumulative effect of the religious harmony was leading towards the first and early golden age of the period in the Deccan. R.S.Morwanchikar was the first scholars who had witnessed the golden age in the period. The growth in the fields of literature, art, architecture and paintings was responsible for the growth in all these fields in an interesting manner.

Thus all these benefits of social harmony can be understood properly on the basis of the study of epigraphic evidences, literature and art & architecture as well. Thus the development achieved in the period was a cumulative effect of the religious harmony achieved by the people and rulers together in a cohesive manner.

5.11. Critical Understanding:

Critical understanding of the religious life in the period reveals that there was a good deal of harmony among various religions. The entire world of religious has been studied here on the basis of inscriptions as well as religious manuscripts and available images and Icons of the period. The Jaina poet Chimna Pandit has described number of Jain temples of Tirthankaras, such as Parshwanath, Neminath and Che... Prof. V.L.Dharurkar has argued and proved that the Jaina influence in the Satavahana period was not meager and scanty. It was full of rich evidences and cordial exchanges among each other. The Hindus, Buddhist and Jaina religions were existing side by side peacefully. The peaceful coexistence among these religions revealed that these religions were interdependent on each other and they had a cohesive system. The
exchange of religious symbols and motifs has been studied here in a systematic manner. These aspects can be highlighted here:

- There was a religious harmony in the period and the social atmosphere was free from malice and hatred.
- There was a cordial exchange of symbols and motifs through art forms which is evident of religious cohesion and harmony.
- Each religion and faith was respecting other religion. Evidences of such peaceful cordial exchange are available on large scale. There is not a single example of interreligious riots and clashes and conflicts. A totally new approach of social peace was developed by rulers. The Satavahana rulers tackled all groups and communities together equally.

Donations and grants were given to all religions without making any discrimination. Huge donations were given for good and constructive work. The inscriptions depicted in these caves illustrate religious harmony of the period. The study of religious manuscripts and their messages revealed that they were honest and sincere. One religion was not crossing its limitations and it was not attaching or conflicting with other religious systems. The most of these religious texts were sacred and respected.

The following three aspects were significant to reveal these facts:

- There was religious cohesion in the period which reflected peaceful coexistence
- All religions were treated by state craft in equality.
- There was not a single evidence of conflicts or struggle among each other.

Thus, a careful study of religious systems revealed a good deal of social peace and harmony in the religious life which was a solid base of the Satavahana’s achievements in art and architecture.

The critical study of harmony in religious life reveals that the entire process was significant enough to throw light on different angles. These angles can be very well debated and discussed:
• In the Satavahana period the majority community was following Brahminical religion but it was also respecting Buddhism, and Jainism.

• The art and architecture of other religions was supported by majority community because all the three believed in equality and respect to each other.

• The socio-cultural life was essentially based on religious harmony which was important character of the period.

A critical study of religious life of the period reveals that there was good deal of social exchange during the period. During the Satavahana period, both Hinduism and Buddhism spread rapidly. The Satavahana rulers were the followers of Brahmanism. They performed Aswamedha Yajnas and gave donations to Brahmanas. Indra, Surya (The Sun God), Chandra, (the Moon God), Vasudeva, Krishna, Pasupati which was a symbol of Shaivism and Gauri was a symbol of Shaktiworship. These were various Gods and Goddesses worshipped by the people of the period. Shaivism and Vaishnavism were most popular form of Hinduism. Beautiful temples were built in the entire Satavahana Empire. Evidences show that these temples were largely worshipped not only by their own cult but by the others also. The social structure was like a pyramid. The Brahmans occupied the highest position in the society.

The Satavahana kings were Brahmans but they showed tolerance towards other faiths such as to Buddhism and Jainism as well. The poet Chimna Pandit of early medieval period had described number of Thinthankara temples prevailing in Paithan, the capital city of Satavahanas. The existence of Jain community in the Paithan city is evidence of the same. The Satavahana kings were patron of art and architectures as well as schools of learning. They gave similar donations to Buddhism as they did for the Hinduism. Consequently, Buddhism too spread in this period. At many places, the Buddhist caves, chaityas and stupas were built.

Almost all the caves in the south belonged to the Buddhists of the Satavahana period. Sometimes, grants of land were made for the maintenance of these chaityas, viharas and stupas as well as for the education and scholarship of monks or bhikshus. In this period, there were several sects of Buddhism in the south and various classes of
monks were always busy to preach the Buddhist doctrines. Ample literary evidences of the Satavahana period bespeak of these donations and endowments for their scholarly centers of learning.

One significant development of this period was the admission of the foreign races of the Sakas, Greeks, Kushans and Abhiras to the folds of Hinduism or Buddhism, which not only widened these religions, but strengthened them by the process of assimilation. They became an integral part of the Indian society. They were quite tolerant and exchanged gifts on religious festivals and other occasions. This shows their sympathetic approach towards Hindu religion and their cordial relationship with mainstream communities.

5.12. Summary

Thus, all the three aspects ably discussed and debated here reveal that there is no record of conflicts or struggles during the Satavahana period. All the three religions were staying side by side because they were respecting the faith of each other. The entire process can be very well examined on the bias of art, architecture and literature manifested through folk literature which was followed by the people effectively. The socio cultural life of the period was based on religious life and good deal of exchanges among all the three religions can be very well studied in this work. All these aspects can be very well illustrated, examined and explained to understand the cultural contribution of Satavahanas to the history of Deccan. The Satavahanas culture during early 300 years of the Chatrapa era was truly a complete culture and this culture has been rightly illustrated in this work for the better understanding of the social and cultural fabric. Hence the study of Satavahanas cultural life can be complete on the basis of the understanding of their religious life. Hence it would suffice to state that the religious harmony was the social base of the Satavahana period which was really a rich and contributing experience. All these aspects have been minutely studied on micro level. This can be very well studied here in the entire spectrum of cultural kaleidoscopic variety of things, different colors of rainbow together.
Satavahanas religious life was thus rightly reflected various sources revealing harmony in various groups. Though there were differences based on methods of worship, yet there was a good deal of harmony in each other. The various examples illustrated in literary sources reveal that the social environment was cordial. All these aspects clearly show how the social life was led. The social exchange can be seen in the basis of symbols and motifs reflected in cave temples of Buddhist faith. The study of religious symbols and motifs has been conducted by Prof. Nihar Ranjan Ray and it has shows that the cave temples at Rajtadag (Aurangabad) are not exception to this. Most of these art works of the Satavahana period can be examined on the basis of evaluation of the literary works and excavation reports as well. The significant contribution of Buddhist and Hinduism as well as Jain religion was very much useful for strengthening nation making. The coordination among each other was benefiting for many positive and constructive works leading towards patronage of art architecture and literature effectively.

It is believed that Satavahanas were originally practicing Sanatana Dharma (as per Sthala Purana of Amravati). Some rulers like Maharaja Satakarni are believed to have performed Vedic sacrifices as well.

All these aspects can be carefully examined in the foregoing pages to describe the progress during Satavahana period in the fields of art, architecture and literature as well. A high water mark in the field of textile, ivory and Terracotta can be described as a side effect of social and religious harmony revealed in economic prosperity.

Art, architecture and literature as well as religion cannot be treated in isolation. They were helping each other to promote social goodwill and constructive economic development, which can be studied as a basic foundation of Satavahana cultural contribution in the Deccan.

In the next chapter contribution of Satavahana in the field of art and architecture will be discussed.