

Religion in Chendellas Dynasty



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Abstract – Religious Sects is a main role in the human life since a long times from early Indian history. He also affected a human life of social structure, judicial and administrative system. So, This article is focused on all of them, whatever connected all types of popular religious system found / sight at that time.

Keywords – Religion, Society, Structure, Sects, Worship, Devout, Dedicated.

Modern Bundelkhand and some nearest areas are known as cheandella Dynasty. His other name is Jajabhukti. The chendella kings were generally worshipers of siva. But the records reveal that they were tolerant to workshippers of other faiths. Some of the chendella kings appear to have been staunch vaisavites. The non-brahmanical religions, jainism and Buddhism also received occasional patronage from the chendallas.

To ascertain the condition of religious worship in Jajabhukti under the chendella rule, we may discuss different sectarian religious separately.

Tradition current in Mohaba regard Maniya Deo (Devi), a tribal deity of the aboriginal people of the area, as the tutelary deity of chendellas throughout their history. A shrine dedicated to the goddess exits at Mohaba, were a rude figure is carved on a projecting boulder. There is another small temple of Maniya Devi on the hills of Maniyagardh (Rajgarh) , the site of a large ruined fort on the left bank of the ken river, from the remains of which has been found image of a female with sword in hand. This has been identified as the figure of Maniya Devi, from whom the 'garh' derives its name. According to Beglar, it does not appear improbable that she was a sort of compromise between the brahmanical parvati and the naked female worshipper to this day by some tribes of gonda. Maniya Devi as the goddess of the chendellas to whom they appealed in times of danger. But mostly records are concerned with Brahmanical sects.

The chendellas rulers conceded an important place to the Brahmanical religion and philosophy will also be evident from a number of inscriptions scholarly Brahmins, who were encouraged to settle in the chendella dominion. Mentions of the distinguishing gotras, pravaras, as also of the particularly sakha of carana of the vedic study, to which they belonged, in the land grants of the chendellas, indicate that popularization of the different aspects of vedic studies was one of the subjects of the chendella rulers. 1

Grants of lands were also considered as acts of piety leading to the increase of religious merit of the donor and his deceased parents(matapitorathatmanah). A number of khajuraho records indicate that lands and dwelling as well as valuable gifts in connection with erection of temples were given not to a single priest but to a number of Brahmins. 2 It may be reasonably presumed therefore that here was a regular hierarchy of priests who looked after the diverse affairs of the temple and conducted the daily worship. Some of them were called royal priest, was made an administrator of justice, Dharmadhikara. Besides the priests mention is made of the temple dancers. The kalanjar pillar inscription in the temple of Nilakantha refers to one Mahanacani Padmavati, the chief of the dancing girls attached to the shrine. She was of the type of temple dancers (devadasis), dedicated to the service of the God for like, found in other parts of India. Temple dancers are also seen depicted on the sculptured panels of the khajuraho temples. The same record also mentions one Mahapratihar (chief door-keeper) Samgramasimha, attached to the temple, Evidently he was a temple official, either appointed by the king or by the priest.

Some of the early rulers of the chendella family including Yasoverman, were devout worshipers of Visnu. 3 The earliest definite reference to the worship of visnu occurs in the khajuraho inscription dated v.s. 1011 (953- 54 A.D.) 4 The record begins and ends with invocation to God Vasudeva — 'Om namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya'.

A temple has been identified by Cunningham with the Vaishnava temple, known as the chaturbhuja temple at khajuraho. It is 98 feet in length and 15'3" in breadth. The 'avatras' of Vishnu, it seems were highly popular with the chendellas.

Saivism was already a popular religion in the north and central India long before the advent of the chendellas. Kalanjar, which became one of the major strong holds of the chandellas, was popularly known for many centuries as an abode of Nilakantha siva, chendella ruler Dhang, became devout worshiper of Siva, and Saivism since then became practically the royal religion in the chendella dominion. The devotion of the Chendella rulers to Saivism is definitely indicated by the assumption of the title of 'Parma-Mahesvara' in their official documents.

Siva is mentioned in the chendella documents in diverse forms depicting the various aspects of the deity. The khajuraho records give us so many following names as :- Rudra, sambhu, Digambara, Suladhara, Mahesvara, Pasupati, Marakatesvara, Vaidyanath, Chandramauli and etc.

The worship of surya or the sun-god also appears to be quite popular among the chendallas. There is a temple known as the Chitragupta temple or Bharatje at khajuraho, specially dedicated to surya.

Some Buddhist images has been unearthed near the kiratsagar lake at Mohaba, which definitely indicate the tolerance of the chendella rulers to the Buddhist.

Jainism has also some hold on the pople, particularly the trading community (sresthins). The jaina temples of khajuraho definitely show that Jainism flourished side by side with Bramanical cults in the chendella territory.

Some icons of Ganga, Standing on her vehicle makara, are noticed in the chendella temples. An image of Ganga is also curved on the body of the great boar of the varaha temple. At the kendarya mahadeva temple there are representations of both Ganga and Yamuna on kurma.

So, the chendellas rulers time to time king by king varies own religious sects and any no single religious mark has been found of that time.

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