



## **SOCIETY AND WOMEN CONDITION IN RATANPUR**

***Shikha Saraf<sup>1</sup>, Dr.Shampa Choubey<sup>2</sup>***

<sup>1</sup>. History Department, Govt.D.B.Girls P.G. Auto. College Raipur, (C.G.)

<sup>2</sup>. Principal, Late. Ramprasad Dewangan Govt. College, Kharora, Raipur (C.G.)

### **Introduction:**

We found from inscription that Varna system was prevalent in Kalchuri era but there was no bigotry. The form of Hindu society was broad rather than narrow, this is the reason why Shakas, Kushans, Gurjars etc. foreign castes were included in the Hindu society. People were not bound to work on the basis of Varna, people of other Varna could become kings according to their qualification, Vallabhraj, A famous Samant of Kalchuris was of Vaishya caste. Similarly, Anulom marriage was also recognized at kalchuri time in Ratanpur, Kalchuri ruler of Tripuri's named Karna's whose wife is Avalladevi was Hun who also got the post of Queen in Ratanpur, thus the following caste system was prevalent in Ratanpur<sup>(1)</sup>

### **1.Brahmins:**

The Brahmins were given special status in the Chaturvanya system. Brahmins were given land by the king to perform 'Panchamahayagyaadi' religious rituals in the context of auspicious work. At this time there were no distinctions like Dravid, Gaur etc. among Brahmins, similarly there were no surnames like Mishra, Awasthi. The distinction was made only on the basis of Veda, branch, and gotra. The Brahmins were very mindful at that time and keep knowledge of their place of origin and proudly mentioned it. The king's ministers were often Brahmins. They used to give proper advice to the king in crisis situations. Such shrewd scholarly ministers are mentioned with pride in the writings of the Kalachuris. At Maratha time the evidence of suryapandi, mathili, kanyankayunjh Brahmins evidence found in Ratanpur at minister post several Brahmins were being appointed and also used to write prashasthi of king in king's court<sup>(2)</sup>

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:	REVIEW ARTICLE
<b>Shikha Saraf</b> Research Scholar, History Department, Govt.D.B.Girls P.G. Auto. College Raipur, (C.G.) E-mail: shikhasaraf368@gmail.com	

## **2. Kshatriya:**

Society had respect for Kshatriyas. Kalchuri kings called themselves Kshatriyas. In his copperplates, the Kalachuri king himself recognized themselves as a descendant of Kartavirya Sahastrarjuna. Kshatriyas were used to be appointed on important posts of the state. Since most of the dynasties were Kshatriyas, Kshatriyas were appointed to high positions in the army and administration. Many Kshatriyas also attained excellence in the field of learning like Brahmins. In many inscriptions, there is mention of a Haihayavanshi named Kumar pal, who was a knower of politics, literature and astrology, he also wrote some praises regarding Kshatriyas mentioned himself as Kshatriyas.<sup>(3)</sup>

## **3.Vaishya:**

Vaishya had a special place in Chaturvanya. Local affairs work was done by this wealthy class. Many men of this caste had shown their bravery even in the battlefield. According to Smith texts, Vaishya have full right to wear weapons during the war period. They had a monopoly on local trade and commerce. Vallabhraj who was contemporary to the Kalachuris rulers have a special influence on Ratanpur were in prestigious power of Shresthi (yash) and had the post of Ratnapur city as head or Nagarseth. Vaishya have special prestigious power in Panchakul or Panchayats of villages or towns Vaishya are known for their trade and commerce in Ratanpur and also keep respect towards brahmanas.<sup>(4)</sup>

## **4.Kayastha:**

Kayastha were respected in the society. Many rich and learned Kayastha also lived in the kingdom of Kalachuris of Ratanpur. Kayastha generally used to keep accounts and used to do collection interpretation of money (Karkuni). In many articles, he has also been called 'Karnik'. The first Yuvrajdev's Amatya Gollak was of Kayastha caste. Many scholars were also Kayastha in the court of Ratanpur. Among them, Rattan Singh and his grandson Devgan Kayastha wrote many praises.<sup>(5)</sup>

## **5.Other Caste:**

Shilpi (craftsman) is also notable among other castes. They were called Sutradhar. Sutradhar (Shilpi) has been mentioned as the builder of the temple in many inscriptions. The description of a cobbler named Devpal has come in the Kalchuri period article; he had built a Vishnu temple in Khalvatika.<sup>(6)</sup>

## **2.Status of women in the society:**

The place of women in the Ratanpur society was respectable. Many women have been mentioned with great respect in the writings of the Kalachuris. There was a custom of sati practice among women. From Shivrinarayan's this is confirmed by a text dated 919. The Kalachuri texts say that queen mother's like Alhana Devi and Gosala Devi helped their sons in their affairs by giving them advice after the death of their husbands. Nonalla, Alhandevi, Gosal Devi and Lachhalladevi had religious and political supremacy. Alhandev, the prince of the younger branch of Kalachuris of Ratanpur, was killed fighting with Tripuri King Jai Singh; along with him the three of his queens

were satied with him. Generally, women were seen with respect in the kalchuri society and in the family in Ratanpur and she gets special social and religious rights also. The queens of Ratanpur had opened the gates of Ratanpur fort by hoisting the white flag. Women had the right to negotiate a treaty, this is confirmed. Sati practice was prevalent in the region after the death of Bimbaji Bhonsle, his queen was also satied in his funeral pyre. The presence of many sati chauras in Ratanpur areas shows that this practice was prevalent in Ratanpur. Compared to man there was no lack of courage, strength, cleverness, efficiency of housework, handicraft in women. The women of craftsmen caste used to do all labor work with their husband in the fields of Ratanpur. <sup>(7)</sup>

### **Conclusion:**

Thus in short, it can be said that social harmony existed in the Kalchuri society. There was no rigidity or complexity in the characters. Due to social harmony, these Ratanpur region attained prosperity and glory during these peace period and there is no discrimination on the basis of caste as upper and lower caste all are equivalent in terms of Ratanpur State too as Devpal is cobbler though builded Vishnu temple it's a great example of social harmony in Kalchuri era time and special place of respect for women is also seen, it is clearly mentioned in the **Ratanpur inscription of Jajalladeva** that Jajalladeva released Someshwara dev from his captivity when her mother requested him to release Someshwara. This is a strong example of respect and obedience to elders as well as women. <sup>(8)</sup>

### **Book Review:**

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2. Santha shukla, 1982, Chattisgarh ka Samajik evam Artik Itihas, (thesis), pg-15
3. Mishra Ramendranath, 1982, Chattisgarh ka itihas, Satakshi prakshan coubey colony, Raipur, pg-30
4. Gupta Pyarelal, 1973, Chattisgarh ka itihas, Ravishnakar Shukla University, Raipur, pg-203
5. Ibid, Pyarelal gupta, pg-204
6. Ibid, shanta shukla, pg-16
7. Ibid, Mirashi. v.v., pg-61
8. Ibid, Mirashi. V.V., kalchuri naresh aur unka kal, samvat 2022, pg-67

