



Ancient Jain centers of Karnataka-Andhra border

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Literature is a very important tool in portraying the history and cultural uniqueness of a nation. Literature is not just entertainment; it becomes a source of explaining the history, character, culture and life of the people of that country. Kannada literature is no exception to this. Since ancient times, Kannada literature has taken various forms and genres according to time and has been helpful in building the cultural history of the context. Seen from this point of view, Sthalapuranas throw light on the ancient culture, customs and traditions of a country. And it is doubtful that they would have produced an equally perfect history. Keeping the original source of the information found there is helpful in engaging in pending fact-finding. Even though the Mahatma of such Sthalapuranas are rarely found in Kannada literature, the 17th century can be said to be an important period in terms of Sthalapurana Mahatmas.

Nidugallu

Tumkur is about 35 kms from Pavagada taluk center of Elle. This Nidugalu area is located in the distance between the breathtakingly beautiful hills. Famous as a historical, religious and cultural center, Tumkur is known as Hampi. Nidugallu area was known by different names earlier. There are many examples of this 'Nilavati Pattana' in Chora story. There is a reference to 'Kalanjanagiri' in the sloka which tells about the Shradhaphala of Harivamsa. Also there is another story which says that Sri Ramachandra came to this hill in search of Sita. Further in many inscriptions there is a reference to the word Kalanjanagiri, Kalanjanabetta, Kalanjanadurga, Kalanjanadri. It is significant that since the time of Puranas and Epics, this hill and town has gradually changed its name and maintained its own relevance even today.

This area has a fort, palace, mandapa, monastery, connery, well, lake, canal, as a trace of the reign of royal families like Ganga, Nolamba, Nidgallu Chola, Rashtakuta, Chola, Hoysala, Vijayanagara, Nidgallu leaders, Hyder, Tipu, Mysore lords etc. Monuments like temples are built. Thus Nidgullu Durga, which was a good camp site for a long time, today resembles a ruined Hampe. The temples of Jain, Vaishnava, Shaivism and the tombs of Muslim saints are proof that Nidugallu was a religiously important area. Also this was a sacred Jain field. Many

Jain families used to live here. These today have migrated to urban areas to earn their living (Pinakini Memoirs Vol. 10-12).

During the time of Immadi Irungola of Nidugallu Cholas, when the Eena Nirgrantha Math was in a high position in Nidugallu area, Gangaiah Marayya and Bachaladevi built Srikashtaharana Parswanath Basadi in 1232 AD after getting blessings from their guru Nemipandit. Besides, the villages of Belibatlu and Amarapura were donated for the maintenance of this temple. This ancient settlement was very famous during the reign of Rajashraya and fell into disrepair after the fall of Rajashraya. A center of religious expansion for a long time, the Basadi was abandoned by the Jains after the Fourth Mysore War, leading to the decline of the Basadi.

Madhugiri:

Madhugiri, one of the major taluk centers of Tumkur Eale, is famous for having the largest monolithic hill in Asia. Earlier, Madhugiri was called as Maddagiri, Krishnagiri, Madhavagiri, Fatehabad. Similarly, Madhugiri means 'honey' in another sense, and 'giri' means hill. Madhugiri got the name 'honey hill' because of the huge hejjen's nests under the rocks and stones at the foot of the hill. Thus it has grown by changing its name in different periods. Also Madhugiri town is seen to have been ruled by various royal families and palegars. It was ruled by Satavahanas, Pallavas, Gangas, Rashtakutas, Nolambars, Nidugallu Cholas, Kalyani Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagara, Mahanada Prabhus, Hyder, Tipu, Marathas, Mysore lords and colonists. As proof of this, the monuments built by them like fort-courtyard, lake-canal, temple, etc. remind the history.

Also, Madhugiri was an important Jain Kshetra because there is a residence of Mallinatha Swami and next to the residence there are idols of Jwala-Malini-Padmavati and Sharad Devi and there is an idol of Lord Brahma who is worshiped mainly by Jains. Also according to local people there was a branch of Lakshmisena Bhattaraka Math of Simhanagadde in Madhugiri. But there is no evidence to say that there was a 'mutt' here. The ancient history of the town 'Madhugiri' can be seen mentioned in Kannada Jain songs.

“The Power of Liberation

I love you out of devotion

Bodhipa Madhugirivasana of Yuktiya

Malli Ineshana Nene Manave”³⁷

This is a song commemorating Mallinatha in Madhugiri.

The design of this Parswanath Basadi has a 10 feet high pedestal and is built on a rock outcropping from the hill. There is a wall around the basadi and the basadi has a 2 feet high pedestal. This basadi has a porch, mahamantapa, sanctum sanctorum and the main idol is made of black stone. There is a corridor on either side of the porch, with elephants carved on either side. In front of the basadi there is a pillar and an altar. Recently Sri Sri 108 Dharmabhushan

Muniraja, the Jain community of Pavagada, Amarapura, Rangasamudra, Nyayadagunte Shayanewadi village have been inspired, renovated this basadi and made regular puja, abhisheka and nOMPI homams.

Bidare:

Bidya is 10 km from Gubbi Taluk Center of Tumkur Eille. Far away, earlier it was called Venupura. The region was ruled by Satavahanas, Gangas, Pallavas, Nolamba, Kalyana Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagara, Hyder-Tipuopa, Marathas, Mysore rulers. In the 10th-11th century AD, a Ganga king (vassal) Gangaraja built three basadis of Mallinatha, Neminatha and Parswanatha Tirthankara, as mentioned in an inscription at Kodi Lake. In the 17th-18th century, Queen Bidya, who was a devotee of Vithal, converted Neminath's basadi into Vithal's temple. Over time, Mallinath Basadi became a Shaiva temple. Evidence of this is that those basadis have been converted into Shaiva temples. This area became famous as an important trading center due to the presence of Jains in the past. But over time, the number of Jains is seen to have decreased as Jains migrated to the cities and towns where they sought employment. Today in the village of Bidya, Jains and Hindus participate in festivals, rituals, rituals and rituals without discrimination.

Nitturu:

Tumkur is 17 km from the center of Gubbi Taluk of Elle. This village is far away. Earlier this town was historically known as Dakshina Aihole and Tenkan Aihole. Nittoor-Nittu = Nittu (Nididu)+Uru means big town or ancient town. Nittu- means to avoid the roof of a house or the slope of a hill. It is faithful to the Sanskrit meaning of the one who tells it as it is and the place at the foot (slope) of a hill. This region gained a lot of fame during the Ganga, Hoysala and Mysore rulers. At that time it had gained the ascendancy of the Jain heritage as an important trading centre. Here is the residence of Neminath Swami, the 16th Tirthankara. There is an idol of Goddess Jwalamalini, an elf. Jwalamalini is the Shakti deity of Nittur. Jwalamalini is highly worshiped in this region.

Legend has it that Jwalamalini of Gerusoppe once appeared in the dream of the young Samantabhadracharya Muni on a beam facing south at Nittur. It is believed that the people here worship her and fulfill their wishes. Inscriptions mention that during the time of Hoysala Bittidevana Rani Shantale, Dana Chintamani Attimabbe and Mysore lords, a lot of donations and endowments were left to this Basadi.

With the passage of time, Jain heritage declined due to migration of Jains. Today, the Jains in Nittur have simplified their festival-celebrations and religious practices that have come from the Jain heritage. Jwalamalini Utsav, Annual Puja of Amman, Special Pooja, Tirtha Aradhana, Shodasha Puja of Amman and Chariotsava Mahabhishekam are mainly held in this area.

Kuchangi:

It is 8 km from Tumkur. is far away. Here Sriparswanath Tirthankara and Yakshini worship Goddess Padmavati. There is a reference in the inscriptions that Sriparswanath Basadi at Kuchchangi was built in 1180 AD by Bammashetty family members.

30 to Hubli before Bammashetty came to Kuchchangi with his son Kesarishetty. km He lived in a distant 'Arabwala'. He was a famous trader during Chalukya rule. As per the order of Kanakachandra Muni, Sri Parswanathaswamy had built a temple there and donated it. AD During the reign of Chalukya Immadi Jagadekamalla in 1145 Bammashetty built a temple of Sriparswanath Tirthankar at Balehalli in Harada, Dharwad. It was entrusted to Kunda Kundanvaya Desigana Prastra Gachchara Maladari Deva, who made a donation and gave a huge donation, in the same year this Bammashetty built a temple of Lord Sri Vijayaparswanathaswamy in the village of 'Karagudari'. It was entrusted to the supervision of Nagachandra Bhattarak Swami and donated. Later this Bammashetty came and settled in Kuchchangi, a famous trading place in the south at that time. Here in AD In 1180 Bammashetty's family built Sriparswanath Basadi. Adhyatma Balachandradeva, a disciple of Nayakirti Siddhant Chakri of Desigane Hanasoge branch of Mula Sangha, gave Dattihalli to this basi which was built under the influence of Upadesha. At that time Kuchchangi was "a religious center and had high positions in trade as well. In the basadi here, religious activities through Ananthanompi etc. were conducted with great devotion in the gathering of huge number of devotees. On the final day of Nompi, the spring Okuli Utsav and the Pujaris at 'Paru Betta' were cheering. In this case, there is a tradition that it was raining that day which is special for this village.

Descendants of this Bammashetti dominated business. This is why the people of this family came to be known as the descendants of 'Gotadike'. Due to the difference in trade, these descendants came to Anatidura Bellavi for the purpose of trading and gained a high status. Some others went towards Belgaum and settled. Even now there are descendants of Gotadike in Belgaum. Here the rest of the families became sadhs due to the pressure of the environment. The people of this family have made Kuchchangi Sri Parswanath Swamy as their house deity.

Midigeshi:

Midigeshi is located in Madhugiri Taluk of Tumkur Eelle. It is a famous historical centre. There are many temples and forts here. This area was earlier under the rule of Palegars. Apart from that, many royal families came under the rule. The most important of them are the reigns of the Gangas, Pallavas, Nolambars, Cholas, Rashtakutas, Kalyana Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagara, Hyder, Tipu, Marathas, Mysore Lords and Paleyagaras. During the time of the Mahanada lords, monuments like forts and temples were built. According to local legends, a village deity resided on the hill in this area. It is said that the town was called Mudi + Keshi = Midikeshi because she had hair from her head to her feet. It is believed by the people here that it became Midigeshi over time.

Worship of Suparswanath Tirthankara and Lord Brahma takes place here. Since there are no Jain families in this town, there is only a priest's house, so the rituals and rites here are similar to those of Hindus. A small idol of the Tirthankar is brought to his house on the

occasion of Grihaprevesha. Namkaran, marriage, are done as per Hindu tradition. Hence, Jain and Hindu ritual practices coexist in this part. Yakshyas like Padmavati, Jwalamalini, Jain auspicious events as Utsava idols and Suparswanath Tirthankara are anointed by sitting the Swami on the Panduka stone with 108 pots. Gandhabhisheka, Halinabhisheka, Kajjaya, Panchamrita Abhishekam are performed and 108 Kalasas are auctioned in this area.

Ratnagiri:

Ratnagiri is located in Madakashira taluk of Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. Ratnagiri is a beautiful area surrounded by forts. It came under the rule of many Palagars and royal families. They are the Gangas, Nolambars, Cholas, Rashtakutas, Kalyana Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagara, Hyder, Tipu, Marathas, Mysore lords who all ruled. Many temples and forts are evidence of this. Ratnagiri was a capital center that flourished even in the colonial days. Monuments such as fortified forts, moats, palaces, temples, Kalyani etc. highlight the rich heritage of this region.

Chandrasena Maharaja is said to have built Parswanatha Tirthankara's Basadi at Ratnagiri. Earlier it was an important Jain center with 4 to 5 hundred Jain families. For some reason, they have migrated in search of employment.

As mentioned in the work Chikkadevaraja, Chandrasena Maharaja himself was a Jain and was inspired by the Guru to establish the Eenamandir. This Chandrasena Maharaja was ruling the areas like Madhugiri, Midigeshi, Shira etc. Jain temples were established in other towns such as Ratnagiri-Midigeshi-Agali-Madhugiri-Shira with the inspiration of four Mahapeeths of Jains such as Delhi, Kolhapur, Eenakanchi, Penugonda. The Jain temple of Ratnagiri is protected from the north-west to the south-east and from the west to the north-south-east. As it was a beautiful place, it led to the establishment of the Ina Mandir here.

Importantly, Shri Parswanath's birthday is celebrated on the seventh day of the month of Shravan. Mahamastakabhisheka of 108 pots is performed. Parswanath is carried on the occasion of christening, housewarming, marriage. They bring it back to the temple and re-pooja and enshrine it. All in all, it cannot be denied that Ratnagiri was a very important Jain centre.

Penugonde:

It is the main taluk center of Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. It is a famous place with ancient history. It was an important region where the Gangas, Pallavas, Hoysalas, Kakatiyas, Bijapur Sultans, Vijayanagara kings ruled and made it the second capital of the Vijayanagara Empire. There are many temples, mosques, forts, monuments, etc. Historical evidence suggests that Penugonde was a cultural centre.

The reason for the name 'Penugonda' is because of the forts built in the inaccessible hills in this area. Penugonda's first name was 'Ghanagiri'. Called Ghanadri-Ghana-Dodda Adri-Gonda-Betta-Ghanadri. At Penugonde there is a temple of Neminath, the 22nd Tirthankara.

This Eenamandir, which has a very ancient history, is said to have been built in the 13th century by the 1st Bukkaraya and the 2nd Bukkaraya.

The 12th century 'Bhaskara Kavi' mentions in his biography of Jeevandhara that he finished writing this work as a novel in Shantinath Basadi. Penugonde was an important Jain centre. Because many Jain monuments like here provide the evidence. Now Muslims have built mosques in many Jain monuments. This Penugonda is one of the four most important Peethas of Jain tradition.

Akkirampura:

It is 10 km from the center of Koratagere taluk of Tumkur Elle. is far away. This region was ruled by the Gangas, Pallavas, Nolambars, Cholas, Kalyana Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagara kings, Hyder, Tipu, Marathas, Mysore rulers. Here is the abode of Anantnath. There is an idol of Lord Brahma on its pillar.

Agali:

Agali is located in Madakisira Taluk of present day Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh. Here the Gangas, Nolambars Nidugallu, Cholas, Rashtrakutas, Kalyana Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagara kings, Hyderabad There are monuments like temple, Kot Kotala, lake canal etc. as a trace of the rule of Palepattas like Tipu, Marathas, Mysore lords. During Nidugallu Chola period AD. In the year 1260 AD, a man named Subbaiyashetty built a pillar in front of Adinath Tirthankar's residence, now it has fallen down and there is only an altar. On the right side of the basadi there are three Nisidi stones which refer to the fact that women in this area also took a vow of devotion and self-sacrifice in Jainism. But today there are only three Jain families who have relaxed the strictness of their practices and merged with Hindu practices. Mainly they carry out rituals like Gaurihabba, Elders festival, Ugadi, Eenaaratri (Shivaratri) Nagara Panchami etc. Especially after worshipping Kshetrapalini, they worship other gods (Eena Tirthankars).

Tovina Kere:

Tovinakere is about 18 km from the center of Koragere taluk of Tumkur Elle. is far away. The Siddhar hills are in the western direction. It is a beautiful region full of natural beauty. Hence the name Tovinakere.

Here is the abode of Chandranatha Tirthankar and Jwalamalini is a fairy. Jain families, who used to be large in number, have now flocked to the town in search of employment. Recently (1941-42) Basadi has been renovated.

Ancient Jain centers were built on the Karnataka Andhra border and work depicting the history of Jainism. The above Jain centers are the areas that testify to the antiquity of Jainism.

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