



ISSN: 2394-7519

IJSR 2021; 7(5): 138-140

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Received: 15-07-2021

Accepted: 20-08-2021

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## Socio-economic conditions of the society as reflected in the *Pādatāditaka Bhāṇa*

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### Abstract

The bhāṇas of the *Caturbhāṇī* comprehend bulks of references manifesting different dimensions of the co-existing society. The four bhāṇas i.e. *Padmaprābhṛtaka*, *Dhūrtavīṭasamvāda*, *Ubhayābhicārikā* and *Pādatāditaka* of the collection *Caturbhāṇī* provide the important information of the society of a particular period regarding the popular beliefs, customs, livelihood etc. The *Pādatāditaka* mentions the city named Sārvabhauma, it was the alternate name known for Ujjayinī. The bhāṇa has portrayed the city Ujjayinī as a flourishing city and a centre of trade and commerce. Ujjayinī possessed a booming economy that is evident from the portrayal of trade and commercial activities, transportation and communication systems, lifestyles of the city dwellers etc. The present paper tries to analyse the socio-economic conditions of the society as depicted in the *Pādatāditaka Bhāṇa*. An attempt has been made to examine different factors that reflect the socio-economic conditions of the concurrent society viz., city life, trade and commerce, transport, occupations as prevailed during the age of the *Pādatāditaka* bhāṇa.

**Keyword:** Socio-economic, *Pādatāditaka*, bhāṇa, society

### Introduction

The *Pādatāditaka*, a bhāṇa kind of rūpaka comes under the collection named *Caturbhāṇī*. This bhāṇa is written by Śyāmilaka. The other three bhāṇas of the collection *Caturbhāṇī* are viz., *Padmaprābhṛtaka* of Śūdraka, *Dhūrtavīṭasamvāda* of Īśvaradatta, *Ubhayābhicārikā* of Vararuci. The plot of the *Pādatāditaka* is the fruit of the poet's imagination. Different unconnected events of the *Pādatāditaka* reflect different issues of the society. Except for the royal life, the authors draw the focus on socio-economic conditions of common people in the bhāṇas.

### City Life

The story of the *Pādatāditaka* bhāṇa is laid down in the city called Sārvabhauma. The editors of the *Caturbhāṇī* have considered the Sārvabhauma as Ujjayinī<sup>[1]</sup>. The term Sārvabhauma means comprising the whole world or known throughout the world<sup>[2]</sup>. Bāṇabhaṭṭa presents an unparalleled description of city Ujjayinī in his *Kādambarī*. There some similarities have been appeared in the description of the cities both in the *Kādambarī* and *Pādatāditaka*. Like Śyāmilaka, Bāṇabhaṭṭa also pictures the city Ujjayinī as a luxurious one which was filled with big mansions, shops with precious things for sale. During the age of the *Kādambarī*, the city was inhabited by pleasure-loving people who were experts in all kinds of art forms<sup>[3]</sup>. The poet calls Sārvabhauma city as the chief ornament of the continent of Jambu, its opulence is known from all kinds of treasures it has possessed. The big mansions of the cities are filled with the sounds of music, the tinkle of women's ornaments, Veda recitations<sup>[4]</sup>. The city Sārvabhauma was crowded with people who belonged to various dynasties- Śaka, Yavana, Tuṣāra, Pārasī, Magadha, Kirāta, Kalimga, Varinga, Kāśa, Mahiṣaka, Colaka and Pāṇḍya<sup>[5]</sup>. It appears that Sārvabhauma or Ujjayinī, the flourishing city of Indian history was the centre of commerce and cultural exchanges.

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## Trade and Commerce

The central market of the city Sārvabhauma was situated in the middle of it. The shops of the market were crowded with men and women. People came to buy and sell both cheap and costly things produced from both land and water of various regions [6]. In the bhāṇa, Viṭa has beautifully portrayed the engagement of the buyers and sellers of the market [7]. The loud and harsh noise that came from the overcrowded shops was appeared annoying like the sound of a flock of nesting birds or a herd of cows on the grassland. Large numbers of shops for selling flowers were there in the central market of the Sārvabhauma city [8]. The business of flowers occupied great importance in those days due to its applications in various purposes. Besides, people also gathered in front of the butcher shops for buying meats [9].

## Transport

In ancient India, people used different kinds of vehicles for communication. During the age of the *Pādatāḍitaka*, the rich people used Šibikā for travelling purposes. Šibikā means palanquin which is a closed litter carried on the shoulders of four bearers [10]. Viṣṇudāsa, the minister of a king was wandering around the streets of the harlot in a white palanquin without having kañcuka i.e., cover [11]. This indicates that the palanquin had widows and had covers in it. *Vainītaka*, Šibikā were kinds of palanquins used for transportation in ancient society [12]. Šyāmilaka refers to a vehicle named *Karṇīratha* which had been used by the courtesan to travel [13]. *Karṇīratha* was a kind of covered litter or palanquin used particularly for the conveyance of the ladies [14]. This vehicle had wheels and was borne on and dragged by the charioteers as referred to by the bhāṇa [15]. Kālidāsa also mentions *Karṇīratha* in the *Raghuvamśa* where Sītā was conveyed in a *Karṇīratha* through the roads of Ayodhyā [16]. Horses and elephants brought from Kamboja were used for transportation by wealthy city dwellers. A species of horse brought from Kamboja was known as Kāmboja in ancient India [17]. The *Manusmṛti* mentions the Kamboja province which was captured by Candragupya II [18]. The chairs of the vehicles were covered with *kutha* i.e., a painted or variegated cloth [19]. A vehicle named *kambalavāhyaka* is also referred to by Šyāmilaka specially used for carrying women [20]. The correct form of *kambalavāhyaka* should be *kambalivāhyaka* according to the editors of the *Caturbhāṇi*. *Kambalin* simply means a bullock. *Kambalivāhyaka* is a carriage covered with blankets and drawn by oxen, a bullock cart [21]. Śūdraka in his *Mṛcchakatika* provides rich information about different kinds of vehicle. The kind of description we have found in the *Pādatāḍitaka* is also available in the *Mṛcchakatika*. The *Mṛcchakatika* mentions śakaṭa i.e., a cart [22] drawn by bullocks [23]. Courtesans purchased these carts to travel outside [24].

In the *Pādatāḍitaka*, the author has pictured the organized and properly structured city-planning of Sārvabhauma. The streets of the central market of the Sārvabhauma city were systematically constructed. Shops of the central market were situated over the main road called *vipāṇimārga* [25]. A small street adjoining the flowery shops came up from the main road deviating from the central market [26]. The street was named *puṣpavīthikā* which ultimately joined the streets of brothels. The term *vīthikā* means row, line or street [27]. This could be considered that either *puṣpavīthikā* was a street of flowery shops or a row filled with flowers or gardens. The bhāṇa mentions a place named Šringāṭaka where *puṣpavīthikā* got connections with several other streets. Šringāṭaka is a

place where four or several roads meet, crossway [28]. Another place, the bhāṇa mentions Šringāṭaka as *catuṣpatha* [29] like the *Amarakoṣa* infers the term [30]. The crossway of the city leads to some highways for carriages called *rathyā* [31]. Viṭa is described to be walked through the *makararathyā* to arrive in the *veśamārga* [32] i.e., the streets of the brothel. The streets that have portrayed in the *Pādatāḍitaka* were given specific names. Šringāṭaka and *rathyā* taken by Viṭa were known as *Purnabhadra* Šringāṭaka and *Makararathyā* respectively [33]. The *Pādatāḍitaka* mentions *rajavīthī* where *lāvaṇīkāpana* is situated [34]. *Vīthī* means a road, way [35]. It seems that by the term *rajavīthī*, the poet wants to suggest the main street. Again, the term *lāvaṇīka* has two meanings, dealing in salt and charming [36]. As stated by *lāvaṇīkāpana*, the poet may indicate the beauty salons situated in the main street of the city where the courtesans beautify themselves.

## Occupation

The occupation of *karmmāra* [37] i.e., blacksmith seems to be very popular at the age of the *Pādatāḍitaka*. In a description, the author has stated that the shops of the blacksmith were filled with customers. The shops resonated with echoes of metal and hissing of knives [38]. There are references that indicate that people were engaged in the occupation of teaching as like Bhavasvāmī and his father. Bhavasvāmī who is a teacher by occupation seems to be very humorous, an expert in all kinds of art forms and a scholarly person. He is portrayed as being surrounded by his disciples all the time [39]. People were also engaged in the occupation of *bhisaj* i.e., a healer, physician [40]. In the *Pādatāḍitaka*, there is a physician named Hariścandra who is referred to as returning from his beloved's house after treating her sickness [41].

Ujjayinī, the ever celebrated city in the history of Sanskrit literature was also portrayed as prosperous in the *Pādatāḍitaka*. Most of the people were engaged with the commercial activities, some were assigned as the head officials of the state to look after the political activities and some people earned their livelihood by performing different kinds of art forms like dance, drama, music, painting, writing etc. The *Pādatāḍitaka* exhibits well established road connectivity and vehicles that existed during that period. There were provisions of roads that connected different parts of the city viz., *rājamārga*, *vipāṇimārga*, *puṣpavīthikā*, *veśamārga* etc. Some vehicles used for transportation are *ratha*, *śibikā*, *karṇīratha*, *kambalavāhyaka*. People used horses, elephants, bulls for transportation. Large numbers of shops for different commodities in the central market of Ujjayinī confirms the city as center of trade and commerce. Thus the city life, trade and commerce, transport, occupations as exhibited by Šyāmilaka in his *Pādatāḍitaka* establish that the people of Ujjayinī afforded luxury living.

## Reference

1. *Pādatāḍitaka*, p.162
2. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.1210
3. *Kādambarī*, pp.154-155
4. *Pādatāḍitaka*, 22
5. śakayavanatuṣārapārasīkai-  
rmagadhakirātakalimgavarīgakāśaiḥ /  
nagaramatimudāyutāṁ samantā-  
nmahiśakacolakapāṇḍyakeralaiśca // *Ibid.*, 24
6. ....anekadeśāsthala jajalajaśāraphal gupanyakrayavikrayo  
pasthitastrīpuruṣa-samībādhāntarāpaṇām

7. sārvabhaumasya vipaṇimanuprāptah / *Pādatāḍitaka*, p.166
8. śakunīnābhivāvāse  
pracāresu gavāmiva /  
janānām vyavahāreṣu  
sannipāto mahadhvaniḥ // *Ibid.*, 27
9. sumanasa imā vikrayīntे hasantya ive śriyā / *Ibid.*, p.167
10. karadṛtatrṇairmāṁsakāryairapāṅganirīksitā //  
*Pādatāḍitaka*, p.167
11. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.1072
12. aye ko nu khalveṣo'vamuktakañcukatayā  
dhavalaśibikayebhyavidhvālīlāṁ viḍambayannita  
evābhivartate / *Pādatāḍitaka*, p.163
13. vainītakam paramparāvāhane śibikādike /  
*Śabdaratnākara*, III.263
14. āśinairavalīḍhacakravalayairmīladbhirāvantikai-  
dhāryārūḍhakirātasaṅgatadhurāstiṣṭanti karṇīrathāḥ  
*/Pādatāḍitaka*, 34
15. Apte, V.S., *The Practical Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.389
16. *Pādatāḍitaka*, 34
17. śvaśrūjanānuṣṭitacāruveṣāṁ karṇīrathasthāṁ  
raghuvīrapatnīm /  
prāśadavātāyanadrśyabandhaiḥ sāketanāryo'ñjalibhiḥ  
praṇemuh // *Raghuvamśa*, XIV,13
18. Apte, V.S., *The Practical Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.395
19. *Manusmṛti*, X.44
20. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.290
21. etat kambalavāhyakam pramadayā dvāḥstham  
samāruhyate / *Pādatāḍitaka*, 104
22. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.379
23. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.1046
24. ārye emau nāśikārajjukaṭukau balīvardai / *Mṛcchakaṭika*, p.226 gaṇikāpravahanamidāṁ / vahiryānaṁ ca / *Ibid.*, p.226
25. ....mahājanasammardadurgamaṁ  
vipanīmārgamutsṛjyemāṁ.../ *Pādatāḍitaka*, p.167
26. vipanīmārgamutsṛjyemāṁ puṣpavīthikāmantareṇa ...../  
*Ibid.*, p.167
27. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.1005
28. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.1087
29. ...taruṇajanākīrṇacatuṣpathaśṛṅgāṭakasya  
veśamahāpathasya parāśrī / *Pādatāḍitaka*, p.233
30. apanthāstvapathāṁ tulye śṛṅgāṭakacatuṣpathe  
*/Amarakoṣa*,2.1.17
31. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.866
32. makararathyā veśamārgamavagāhiṣye / *Pādatāḍitaka*, p.167
33. ....pūrṇabhadraśṛṅgāṭakamavatīrya makararathyā  
veśamārgamavagāhiṣye / *Ibid.*, p.167
34. bhadra rājavīthyāṁ lāvaṇīkāpaṇeṣu mrgyatāṁ gaṇikā /  
*Pādatāḍitaka*, p.204
35. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.1005
36. *Ibid.*, p.900
37. *Ibid.*,p.259
38. svaraḥ sānusvāraḥ paripatati karmmāravipāṇau  
bhramārūḍhaṁ kāsyāṁ kuraravirutānīva kurute /  
*Pādatāḍitaka*, 21
39. ....ācāryaputraḥ svayañcācāryo  
daṇḍanītyānvīkṣkyoranyāsu ca vidyāsvabhivinītaḥ  
kalāsvapi ca sarvāsu param kauśalamamanuprāpto ...../  
*Pādatāḍitaka*, p.157
40. Williams M. Monier, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, p.757
41. esa hi bāhlikāḥ kāmkāyano bhiṣagaiśānacandriḥ  
hariścandraścandra iva kumudavāpīṁ/ *Pādatāḍitaka*, p.167
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