

**Abstract of PhD thesis entitled**  
***Jagaḍūcarita* of Sarvāṇanda: Relocating the Text**

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The thesis aimed at a comprehensive study of the 14<sup>th</sup> century Sanskrit historical poetry from Gujarat, the *Jagaḍūcarita*, composed by a Jain poet Sarvāṇanda Sūri in the form of a *mahākāvya*, which is a panegyric of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Jagaḍū, a wealthy Jain merchant of Bhadreshwar on the Kutch coast of Gujarat. It claims a unique position in the field of Sanskrit ‘historical’ *kāvya*s (also termed *carita*-s by historians of literature), as it has its central character as a merchant, not a ruler (king) or a minister. Sarvāṇanda chose to compose this Sanskrit poetry describing the life and the philanthropic deeds of Jain merchant Jagaḍū in order to promote Jainism through his composition. The work was meant to strengthen the Jain religion during the transitional period experiencing co-existence of Islam and ‘Hinduism’ in 13<sup>th</sup> century Gujarat.

*Jagaḍūcarita*, comprising of 7 cantos and 388 verses, possesses characteristics of both Jain and Brahmanical compositions. It is much more interesting in reflecting a real picture of contemporary Gujarat and in particular its maritime trade relation with West Asian countries. In the present dissertation an attempt is made to sieve out the reliable information from the text to situate it in its true historical perspective.

The *Jagaḍūcarita* has preserved the name of a Sumrā king Pīṭhadeva or Phatū and corroborates the account of the Sumrā dynasty given in the *Muntakhabu-t-Tawārīkh*. Jagaḍū came forward with succour when Gujarat was affected by the terrible famines in c. 1256-1258 CE. He was engaged in building, renovation and ornamentation of several Jain and ‘Hindu’ temples and images and erected a mosque (*masīti*) for Šīmālī (concern to Ismā’īlīs) to meet the religious demands of his ‘Muslim’ sailors and inhabitants of the port town of Bhadreshwar. It reveals the relation of extreme communal harmony among various religious communities, especially with the ‘Muslim’ even after the devastations of the Gaznavid raid of 1025 CE in Somnath.

Different cultures of the society has been traced underlying in the description of the life of Jagaḍū. The *Jagaḍūcarita* is Gujarat’s political, religious, socio-cultural documentation through which picture of society can be drawn only from the information of the text for which it is relocated as a piece of economic importance also.