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Abstracts

Buddhist Remains of North Gujarat with Special Reference to Vadnagar and Taranga

Dr. Yadubir Singh Rawat

The recent excavation and survey conducted at Vadnagar and nearby Taranga Hill in north Gujarat have firmly established that this region adjacent to the south-western end of the Aravalli ranges was an area where Buddhism flourished, at least, from the beginning of the Common Era and continued for a long period up to the twelfth century CE. The finding of a Buddhist monastic establishment at Vadnagar is a testimony to the records of Xuanzang, who around 640--41 CE visited Anandpur (present Vadnagar) and many other settlements in western India which were then well-known centres of Buddhism. He records ten Buddhist sanghārāmas with less than 1000 monks in this area but it is not clear whether those were located in Anandpur city or in the country of the same name.

Taranga is another site in the neighbourhood of Vadnagar which has been known for two shrines containing images of the Buddhist Goddess Tara along with Buddha and Bodhisattvas. Exploration carried out by this author in the surrounding area of these shrines brought to light numerous rock shelters which were modified to be used as living spaces. These shelters also yielded antiquarian remains dating from the first/second century CE to the early mediaeval period. The Buddhist remains have been found on the slopes of three peaks of Taranga hill, on the western side of the ancient fortified settlement most likely the Anartapur town of the Mahabharata fame. These shelters revealed the presence of Buddhist remains besides several natural rock shelters with walls, floors and potsherds which were used for residential purposes. In addition, the finding of terracotta Buddha images, besides the famous Tara Shrine, indicates that this area was a comprehensive Buddhist sanctuary at least from the first century CE to the twelfth century CE. This indicates that Taranga was one of the sites of significant importance with a long chronological bracket within which other Buddhist sites in Gujarat could not survive. Thus, these recent discoveries have opened up scope for further research in the area and also put north Gujarat firmly on the Buddhist map of India.

Key words: Vadnagar, Taranga, Tara, Sanghārāma

Archaeology of Rock Paintings Depicting Stūpas in Gujarat

Prof. V. H. Sonawane

Roots of Buddhism were well established in Gujarat from the third century BCE and remained to survive until about eleventh or twelfth century CE. Apart from the structural remains of Buddhist stūpas and vihāras, the literary, inscriptional, sculptural and archaeological evidence clearly reveals that Buddhism reached its peak of glory in this part of the country from the second to seventh centuries CE. The wide spread of Buddhism is indicative of increased Buddhist activities under the patronage of the Kshatrapa and Maitraka rulers through several Buddhist establishments and a number of rock-cut caves. Apart from varied sites of diverse archaeological importance, depiction of stūpas found in rock paintings in Gujarat added a new dimension to the Buddhist heritage of Gujarat. It is therefore interesting to examine the available archaeological and literary data with a view to understand the stūpa paintings in their proper integrated cultural and historical background.

Since the paper deals with the rock paintings depicting stūpas, I intend to discuss how socio-religious elements of a particular cultural period of a region are responsible for the selection of a focal theme for rock. The stūpa paintings are quite naturalistic in their representation of the monumental structural stūpas. The most outstanding feature of these paintings is the depiction of banners or flags in their composition. The stūpa paintings found in and around Idar on the basis of their stylized structural details including plinth, dome, harmika and the chhatriyaṣṭī bearing a triple umbrella can be assigned to the fifth to seventh centuries CE. Rock paintings of stūpas thus provide excellent examples of the expression of human experience with space and time. These stūpa paintings enable us to visualise the structural monumental stūpas of the immemorial past.

Key words: Stupa, Vihara, Buddhism, Kshatrapa, Maitraka, Idar, Harmika, Chhatrayaṣṭī

Thotlakonda: An Important Buddhist Monastic Site in Coastal Andhra Pradesh

- **Dr. E. Sivanagi Reddy**

Thotlakonda is one of most significant Buddhist sites of the Deccan, located in coastal Andhra Pradesh. The site was excavated by the Department of Archaeology and Museums from 1987-88 to 1991-92 for five successive field seasons. The archaeological excavations unearthed the remains of mahāstūpa, memorial stūpas, apsidal chaityagrhas, circular chaityagrhas, and vihāras. The remains of this Buddhist site bear testimony to one of the flourishing Buddhist monastic settlements of not only of the Deccan but also of India. The study of archaeologist remains reveal that this monastic site was uninterruptedly flourishing from the third century BCE to the third century CE for almost six hundred years. The presence of early Buddhist architecture and early Buddhist symbols strongly indicate the prominence of Theravada Buddhism at the site. The present paper will highlight the significance of the archaeological remains of this Buddhist site to understand its role in the dissemination of Buddhism in coastal Andhra Pradesh. The present paper will also discuss the process of making of this Buddhist monastic site and also the architectural features of this Buddhist site which performed a key role in the development of Buddhist structural architecture in the Deccan. An attempt will also be made to investigate the association of this Buddhist sites with contemporary Buddhist sites of the Early Historic Deccan.

Key words: *Mahāstūpa, chaityagrha, stūpa, vihāra*

Discovery of Deur Kothar, Dist. Rewa, Madhya Pradesh

Dr. Phanikanta Mishra

The site of Deur Kothar was discovered by the author in 1982 during the exploration carried out by the Bhopal Circle of Archaeological Survey of India. The ancient Buddhist site near village Deur Kothar (Lat 81°40' long 24°56'N) falls in the Teonthar Tehsil of district Rewa in Madhya Pradesh. It is located midway on the Rewa-Allahabad road (National Highway No. 27). It is about 5 km north-west of Karta.

The site gained importance due to very rich archaeological finds. The archaeological remains discovered in and around a 3 km area include four brick

stūpas, seven monasteries, sixty-three rock shelters, thirty stone-built stūpas, ancient water channels, ancient pathway, Brahmi inscriptions, caves with Shankhalipi inscriptions etc. The site has yielded the colossal Mauryan Pillar, the earliest art on the balustrades and the donative inscriptions therein are symbolic of changing times when participation of the laity was steadily replacing state patronage. The antiquity of these archaeological remains goes back to the third-second centuries BCE.

The site was located on the Dakshinapatha (Southern trade route) running east-west from Pataliputra (Patna) to Pratishtana (Paithan) in Maharashtra through Central India. In between lies Buddhist sites such as Bharhut, Sanchi and on the other side after Deur Kothar, are Buddhist sites such as Sarnath, Vaishali, Kesariya etc. The main objective of this archaeological operation was to ascertain the antiquity of the site and to understand the exact nature of Buddhist movement at the site. With this end in view, the excavation work was started at stūpa no. 1 (the main stūpa) in 1999 and was continued up to 2000.

The present paper aims at examining the architectural features of the site and its archaeological heritage. It will also discuss the significance of this Buddhist site to understand the spread of early Buddhism in Central India.

Key words: Stūpa, Monastic complex, Brahmi inscriptions, Rock shelters, Mauryan pillar

Buddhism in Tripura: An Archaeological Route between Myanmar and Bangladesh

Prof. Projit Kumar Palit

Trade and Trade routes played an important role for transmitting the Buddhism and Buddhist culture in Tripura, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and other parts of South-East Asian countries. Buddhist culture expanded from Nalanda to South-East Asian countries through trade routes of Surma valley, Cachar valley, Lushai hill, Maynamati hill, and Trippera, Boxnagar-Pilak region of north-east India. This trade route was linked with the western provinces of Myanmar and the South-western provinces of China up to Hukawang valley. Traders and Buddhist preachers from eastern and north-eastern parts of India travelled by this route to reach the different parts of Myanmar and Hukawng valley of China. It is presumed that the Buddhist monk Buddhagupta and his followers travelled from

Buntavarta (maybe it was Pundravardhana) to Balu (may be, it was Pegu) via Tripura (high land), Haribhanja, Cittagange, Kasaranga or Devikota Rakan (Arākān), and Bakan (maybe it was Pagan). From the Northern part of Asia, the Chinese people and different Indo-mongoloid races came from the same route. So, a lot of important Buddhist monasteries were developed on this trade route from the sixth century CE onwards. These are Somapura vihāra, Salban vihāra, Pilak vihāra, Boxnagar vihāra etc. Monasteries played an important role in spreading Buddhist culture and values in this region. According to the Arakan (Burma) chronicles, the Magh King Peng used the route and established Pilak as a capital of his kingdom Pleingsa. Pilak monastery is similar to that of the Mainamati monastery. Terracotta panels on the walls of the Pilak monastery are found in Mainamati and Paharapur monasteries. Pilak monastery was well connected with Nalanda and other monasteries of South-East Asia. So Hiuen Tsang, I-tsing and Seng-che CH'an Shih - all these Chinese travellers referred to the region in their accounts. Pilak monastery was the centre point of the connecting route and spread Buddhist culture and heritage to Burma and other parts of South-East Asian countries.

The paper aims to make a unified approach to study all these issues from a holistic viewpoint of Buddhist heritage components in Tripura like literature, arts, and religion of the site in detail.

Key words: Buddhist Architecture, Pilak, Arakan, Terracotta, Monastery

Archaeological Investigations at Udayagiri, Odisha

Dr. Milan Chauley

Buddhism in Odisha had a long history from the 6th century BCE to the thirteenth--fourteenth century CE and its cultural remains are spread throughout the length and breadth of the state. The epigraphical evidence speaks only of a few sites and even less about the patronage and dating of the sites. At present there are more than 600+ Buddhist sites reported scattered throughout the state. It is at the same time surprising to note that the largest concentration of the Buddhist sites are in the vicinity of the Brahmanical establishments and are largely confined in the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Kendrapara, Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur, and Puri. Whereas, the rest of the state, especially the northern and northwestern districts are mountainous regions and are sparsely

populated, densely forested and are crisscrossed with a large number of rivers and are inaccessible. So, very little research work has been undertaken in these areas. Of these only twenty one sites are excavated i. e. four major and seventeen minor (Ganiapalli, Kurum, Abhana, Kapilaprasada, Aragarh, Brahmavana, Sakuntalapur, Ranipur Jharial, Khiching, Kayama, Deuli (Kumari hill), Tarapur (Duburi hill), Vajragiri, Kantigadia, Neulpur, Radhanagar, and Viratgarh) and the rest are explored sites.

Udayagiri (Lat. 20° 38' 45"E. Long. 86° 16' 25"N)

Udayagiri is situated on the eastern slope of the Asia range in present Jajpur district on the Birupa River. The hill has two arms, one extending to the north-east and the other to the south-east, forming a bay opening to the east. The site was first taken up for excavation in 1985 by Excavation Branch IV, Bhubaneswar of ASI. The excavation brought to light a complete monastic complex with its huge compound wall adjacent to a well-built stūpa. Monastery-I's enclosure wall was exposed on three sides i. e. north, east, and south. The monastery revealed that it was constructed in at least four phases. The monastery measures 35 m × 35 m and follows the same age old method of chauth-sala with an open court-yard measuring 12.40 m square, a verandah, and a central shrine chamber measuring 3.15 m × 2.75 m. There are eighteen cells around the courtyard, five each in the north and south, four each on the eastern and western wing. All the cells are facing the courtyard. An average cell measures 3.25 m × 2.90 m. In the north-east corner of the courtyard a huge stone drain is exposed that was meant for draining out of the rain water. The monastery is facing east and the sanctum houses an image of Buddha seated in bhumisparshamudra (dated between the eight and thirteenth centuries CE).

The Brick stūpa stands to the south-east corner of the monastery at Udayagiri. The space between the compound wall and the stūpa measures 2.5 m which was used as pradakshinapatha. The stūpa is roughly square on plan, with each side measuring 10 m. The total height of the stūpa is 7 m from the ground and is about 4.8 m from the pradakshinapatha. On all the four cardinal directions within niches figures of Dhyāni Buddhas about 1.5 m high are placed. On the east is Akshobhya, on the south is Ratnasambhava, on the west is Amitabha and on the north is Vairochana or Abhisambodhi-Vairochana. Each Dhyāni Buddha is flanked by a pair of Bodhisattvas. Iconographically, the images can be dated to the mid-eight century CE. From the excavations more than fifty unique sculptures of Buddhist divinities were unearthed. Majority of the images here are

stylistically dated to the eight-ninth century CE. Besides, 126 sun-baked clay sealings were also discovered. They are of the traditional type, having depiction of dharmachakra flanked by deers on either side, inscribed with “Sri-Madhavapura-mahaviharaya-arya-bhikshu-sanghasya” indicating that the site was known as Madhavapura-mahavihara.

At Udayagiri it was felt that there were more than one monastic complex, on the southern side. To confirm this, excavations were undertaken here in 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002, and 2002-2003. In the first three years of excavation a beautiful monastic complex consisting of a monastery and a double storied shrine chamber was unearthed. The uniqueness of this monastery (Simhaprasta Mahavihara) is that it has a water reservoir behind the monastery, on the south west side. The monastery is square on plan and measures 30 m × 30 m. It has a stone paved entrance facing north; most of the stones of the pavement are missing now. The courtyard which is in the centre measures 16 m × 16 m and is stone paved. In the excavations two phases of construction were identified. The shrine chamber is in the centre of the southern wall. It enshrines an image of a colossal Buddha seated in bhumisparshamudra. The shrine chamber has a circumambulatory passage. In all, the monastery has 13 cells. The cell openings are facing the verandah except one on the northwest, here the cell is facing south and the access to the inner cell is through this cell. The inner cell has a secret chamber measuring 83.5 × 75 × 98.5 cm. It is constructed below the floor to the left. The cells measure approximately 2.90 m × 2.75 m. In the north-east corner is the staircase leading to the first floor. The monastery was double storied. The second floor also has a shrine chamber, which was constructed directly over the southern outer wall. Besides the above a host of antiquities were also recovered from this area, which date between the eight to twelfth century CE. This monastery bore a separate name, which is evident from the monastic seal unearthed here, which reads as ‘Simhaprasta Mahavihara.’

***LDIn the field, seasons 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 excavations were undertaken towards the east of the Simhaprasta monastery. A huge area was exposed, in which along with an apsidal chaityagriha, elaborately decorated with images of Bodhisattvas seated over simhasanas within a stupa complex (consisting of more than 140 stupas, all structural either of bricks or stone or a combination of both) were brought to light. Beyond this complex another huge structure made with a lot of use of stone blocks and slabs was exposed. In this area a large number of votive monolithic stupas were also found, a few can still

be seen in the sections, as if they have been rolled down to that place from somewhere else.

The present paper aims at examining the significance of this Buddhist site in the dissemination of Buddhism in Eastern India in general and in Odisha in particular. The present paper will also make an attempt to investigate inter- and intra-regional interaction and influence of this Buddhist site on other Buddhist sites of the region.

Key words:

Sujatagarh Stūpa At Bakraur, Bodhgaya (Bihar): An Archaeological Appraisal

Dr. Shanker Sharma

The archaeological landscape of Bodhgaya has two major divisions that are settled on the bank of river Niranjana (though the Falgu is popular modern name): the Mahabodhi temple on the western bank and the Sujatagarh stūpa at Bakraur on the eastern bank of the river. Various archaeological expeditions carried out at Sujatagarh have revealed promising evidence which signifies the legend adhered with the site. The stūpa site of Bakraur is traditionally known by various names like Sujata Kuti, Sujatagarh and Sujata Quila named after the maiden Sujata, the daughter of the chief of the village, who offered milk-rice to Buddha after he had undergone severe asceticism for six years to gain Enlightenment. Chinese pilgrim Xuanxang also visited this place and acknowledged that the stūpa and some other things were erected in commemoration of the tradition related with Sujata. He tells a story regarding 'Elephant of Perfume' (gandh-hasti) which was captured by a king. This is the spot where a perfume-elephant waited on his mother and the spot where formerly the Tathagata was practising discipline as a Bodhisattva. A. Cunningham identified the mound with that of the stūpa known to Buddhist tradition as the gandha-hasti-stūpa and mentioned by Xuanxang. Xuanxang mentions the name of the place as Ajayapura.

Some early expeditions carried out during British time suggest that there were remains of pillar, old pond, ruined mound etc. The mound before its excavations and protection was subjected to constant robbing primarily to collect bricks to be used in construction of houses. Buchanan during his visit in the early nineteenth century states that Mr. Boddam, the former Collector of Gaya had removed many

stones and bricks from here for construction of buildings at Gaya. Treasure hunting was also one of the aims of robbing and destruction caused to the mound in this manner.

In order to bring the mystery to an end, K. M. Srivastava of ASI had carried out excavation work at the ancient site of Bakraur in the year 1973--74. On the basis of some outstanding discovery it has been confirmed that this was the very place where the pious lady Sujata used to reside. In order to understand the complete structural morphology of the stūpa, Patna Circle of ASI in the year 2003--04 again carried out the excavation work and exposed the stūpa in its complete shape. The excavations revealed various stages of construction of the stūpa. On the basis of its antiquarian remains and epigraphical evidence the stūpa can be ascribed to the eighth-ninth centuries CE as of its last occupational phase.

This site has a distinct feature in terms of structural morphology that is related to one of the most sacred places for the Buddhists. But, this place could not gain much popularity in the archaeological studies and historical consideration. Thus, the present paper is an effort to shed light on its archaeological history and discovery of this most sacred but less popular archaeological site for the Buddhist world.

Key words: Sujatagarh Stūpa, Bakraur, Bodhgaya

Re-evaluating Mansar: A Case Study of MNS 2

Dr. Rohit Ukey

Mansar is an important archaeological site near Nagpur in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. This site is enriched with archaeological findings, especially brick structures, i.e., MNS 2, MNS 3, MNS 4, and MNS 5. Every brick complex has religious and political connotations. One of them, Mansar 2/MNS 2 is a massive brick structural complex excavated in 1994 by Dr. Amarendra Nath. Dr. Nath has claimed that it was a Buddhist monastery. Before his report, references to the structure were found in the P. W. D. report (1906) and Nagpur Gazetteer (1908). T. A. Wellstead proposed that either it was a secular architecture or a Buddhist monastery, which is observed in his synoptic report (1934). After Nath's report, many scholars like Hans Bakker (2004), J. P. Joshi and A. K. Sharma (2005), and Ellen Raven (2008) have proposed that it was a secular/palace structure. J. P. Joshi and A. K. Sharma have added that the earlier structure was a palace till the

Vākāṭaka period. Later, it was converted into a Buddhist monastery during the Viṣṇukuṇḍina period. The above-mentioned scholars, who were deeply engaged with their ideas, offered various interpretations for the complex that have been changing from time to time. Therefore, Mansar 2/MNS 2 allows looking beyond the stereotypical readings and producing new analytical studies by applying art historical methodology.

The paper aims to re-evaluate the identity of the Mansar 2 (MNS 2) brick structure. The objectives of the research depend on the iconographic study. Besides, the enquiries are based on readings of the Vidarbha region's political history and analysis of the development of architecture as changing political dynasties. The study also depends on applicable inscriptional evidence and the comparative analysis with brick structures from the Indian subcontinent.

Key words: Mansar, MNS 2, Monastery, Palace, Vākāṭaka, Viṣṇukuṇḍina

Rajaghatta - A Unique Buddhist Site in Karnataka

Prof. M. S. Krishna Murthy

Rajaghatta (13° 19' 30" N and 77° 35' 45" E) is situated at a distance of eight kms north-east of Doddaballapur in Bengaluru (rural) district of Karnataka. Archaeological excavations of the site conducted during the seasons 2001 and 2004 by the author revealed brick foundations of a rectangular Buddhist chaitya hall, surrounded by a quadrangular prākāra. The eastern wing of the prākāra revealed seven living rooms of the vihāra and a bathroom. The northern wing was just a huge wall with an entrance in the centre. The southern wing had totally disappeared and the western wing was not excavated.

The chaitya hall was built facing south in the middle of the prākāra. On plan, the chaitya measures 11.5 × 9.5 mts. It consists of an astylar, apsidal hall (4.3 × 3.5 mts.), a detached circum-ambulatory path surrounding the hall. This path is rectangular in plan. The outer wall of the chaitya, also rectangular in plan, had three entrances opening to the south, to the east, and to the west.

Though the building was found destroyed up to the floor level, based on the clues found in the excavation, one can say that it was an ornate chaitya hall, built blending the Greek and Buddhist architectural elements. Hundreds of customised bricks and numerous remnants of lime stucco figurines and other architectural

members found at the site, however, establish that the building was profusely decorated with architectural and decorative motifs. These features make this chaitya a unique and a rare building of the Buddhists in India.

Other interesting antiquities found in the excavation are (1) Hundreds of tiny votive stūpas of earth made out of moulds, (2) Enormous customised bricks of various shapes and sizes, (3) A tiny earthen medallion having the seated representation of the Buddha, (4) A small terracotta figurine of a seated Gajanana, and (5) A Buddhist relic in the form of a small terracotta flower. A notable feature of the earthen votive stūpas is that they all have, in their core, a clay tablet impressed with the famous Buddhist hymn “ye dharma hetuprabhava “. The approximate time of existence of this chaitya and vihāra complex is estimated, on circumstantial evidence, to be the 4th-6th centuries CE.

A detailed description, study and analysis of the excavated finds, supplemented with good photographs and line drawings, are made in this paper.

Key words: **Rajaghatta**, Chaitya, Prākāra, Vihāra complex

Urbanisation During Early Historic Period in the Purna Basin With Special Reference to Bhon

Prof. Bhaskar C. Deotare

Archaeological exploration was undertaken in the middle Purna basin during 2001 where a number of sites were discovered ranging in age from Early Historic to Mediaeval period within 50 sq km radius. The excavations at two archaeological sites of Bhon and Paturda in the Purna basin of Vidarbha region have brought to light interesting and encouraging results on the climatic change and their impact on the cultural behaviour during the early historic and mediaeval periods.

The flourishing prosperity at Bhon in terms of social, economic, and cultural growth during the Early Historic period (second half of the third century to the end of first century BCE) was indicative of a well-organised urban and trading centre situated in middle Purna. On the contrary, decline after the sixth to ninth centuries CE in respect of cultural and social patterns at the early Medieval site of Paturda (a rural settlement just 10 km east of Bhon) is the major setback so far as climatic conditions are concerned. The Early Historic site of Bhon has revealed

ample evidence of mature urban society like well-organised housing pattern, water management within settlement, advanced irrigation facility, trading and above all Buddhist structural stūpa. On the contrary, Paturda has yielded few antiquities with typical mediaeval pottery and ample carbonised grains of sorghum (jawar). One of the probable reasons for the cultural deterioration within the 600 years time span from urban to rural may be due to climate as revealed from the archaeological findings. The present semi-arid zone of the Purna basin (average rainfall 800 mm) might have experienced substantially increased rainfall during the Early Historic period and thereby establishing Bhon as a major centre on the ancient trade route.

Key words: Purna basin, Early Historic Site, Archaeological findings, Early Mediaeval, Climate Change, Urban and Rural Settlements

Excavations At Kanaganahalli- A Unique Buddhist Site

- **Dr. D. Dayalan**

The exploration followed by excavations at Kanaganahalli (Lat. 16 51' 10" N and Long. 76 56' 20" E) and its surrounding area on the left bank of Bhima River in Karnataka State by the Archaeological Survey of India has brought to light the most outstanding discovery of Buddhist stūpa complex which is in fact unique in the history of Buddhist art of India in general and of Karnataka in particular.

The *stūpa* complex is constructed in highly sculptured lime stone slabs and the core is filled with mud, brick bats and rubble stones. The extent portions of the stūpa at Kanaganahalli consist of the lower and upper medhi (drum) and the lower part of aṇḍa (dome). The stūpa proper is of 22 meters diameter enclosed by the railing with a diameter of 28 meters. The railing, typical to the stūpa architecture is composed of a series of tabhas (upright pillars) and suchis (cross-bars). The drum of the stūpa is divided into two tiers i.e., lower and upper medhi encased with exquisitely carved panels depicting the symbolic representation of the Buddha such as vajrāsana and bodhi vṛkṣa with a seat below, stūpa models, dharmacharka, muchilinda nāga, jataka stories, events in the Buddha's life and other themes related to Buddhism. Majority of the sculptured panels are dislodged from their position and scattered all over the area. Large number of label inscriptions mention about the name, status and origin of the donors, names of the ruling kings and details of the depictions in the sculptured panels are

unearthed from the excavations. The excavations also brought to light the coins of contemporary periods. The papers deals about the digital documentation of the excavations and also of the hundreds of sculptural panels and architectural members spread to an area of 2500 sq. meters, for the purpose of restoration of the stūpa by placing the members at their original positions. The paper also deals with the identification of the places from where the donors/pilgrims came from and plotting of the places in the map. The conservation work undertaken by Archaeological Survey of India to preserve the stūpa is also highlighted in this paper.

Key words:

Buddhist Remains at Giriya hills: Some Archaeological Observations

- **Prof. Anand Singh**

The paper deals with the study of the hilltop Buddhist complex known as Giriya at Rājgir, Nālandā district of Bihar, India. This site was first noticed by the archaeologists of the colonial period which prominently include A. M. Broadley, Francis Buchanan, Malcom Kittoe, Alexander Cunningham who surveyed and explored the site to identify Buddhist monastic artefacts and archaeological remains. The archaeological landscape of Giriya offers mult-layered linear development of Buddhism since the NBPW period. A. Cunningham articulates it as Indasāla-guhā where the Buddha preached the Sakkapañña Sūta but it was vehemently opposed by A.M. Broadley and others. The archaeological remains include well-preserved stūpas, water reservoir, monasteries, and seals. The close examination of remains at Giriya provides new facets into antiquity, development, and continuity of Buddhism from the age of the Buddha to the early medieval period. An enigmatic structure located on a steep hill protected by parapet corresponds to a glimpse of a well-developed sacred space of stūpas and vihāras. Giriya hill monastic complex is dominantly embedded with the stūpa cult. The remains show an absence of image worship and a place for stūpa worshipers. Numerous stūpas, symbol of stūpas on pillars and seals show that the site belongs to the Sthavīras. The caves in the surrounding hills show interesting but intricate information. The existing artefacts and monastic remains leave no doubt that Giriya was the first fully evolved hilltop monastery in the Magadha region. At Giriya monastic activities began during the age of the Buddha and continued up to the early medieval age.

The present paper aims at examining the archaeological remains and associated artefacts yielded from the archaeological investigations carried out since the colonial period till recent archaeological excavations under aegis of the Archaeological Survey of India to understand the satisfactory identification of this hilltop monastery corroborated by the Buddhist textual sources.

Key words: Giriyaka, Indasāla-guhā, Magadha, hilltop monastery.

Archaeology of Buddhism in Early Mediaeval Eastern India: New Evidence from Moghalmari

Dr. Rajat Sanyal

In the last sixty years, all the regions and subregions of eastern India have witnessed spurt of discoveries underlining strong material bases of Buddhism, particularly in the early mediaeval period, spanning from the sixth-seventh to the twelfth-thirteenth centuries. Several vihāra and stūpa sites have been excavated and documented, while some of them have been thoroughly interrogated involving varying archaeological methodologies.

It is difficult to visualise the archaeology of Buddhism in Bengal, comprising both the Indian state of West Bengal and the independent Republic of Bangladesh, as a homogeneous set of phenomena, either chronologically or geographically. Thus, the genesis of monastic Buddhism and its materiality in early mediaeval Bengal has to be viewed in terms of variegated intra-regional and even local developments, quite in keeping with the political and cultural lives these subregions lived. Compared to the qualitative profile of and the academic interests in the database from northern and southeastern Bengal that of southern and southwestern parts of Bengal, geographically incorporated in the state of West Bengal, has been admittedly insufficient and less researched. One has to record, however, that since the 1960s, there have been some major discoveries in this geographical-cultural niche of the delta. Among the four major sites of this zone, Moghalmari, located in the Dantan Police Station in the southwestern district of Paschim [West] Medinipur appears to be as promising as enigmatic. The extensive architectural complex excavated at the site yielded structural and epigraphic evidence of a twin monastery within a single premises. Stratigraphically, at least three structural levels were exposed. Excavations also yielded a plethora of material evidence underlying the realia of monastic life. But,

questions unresolved are also numerous. What about the patronage of such a huge establishment that existed for more than six centuries? Do we have any idea of the identity of the craftsmen who produced the stucco and stone sculptures of the highest aesthetic merit? Why do we have two individual monasteries with two different names inscribed on sealings, existing at the site at the same point of time? How do we understand their interrelationship? Why are these names not found in the texts, particularly the celebrated itinerary of Xuanzang, though the monastery was flourishing when he came to Tāmralipta? What was the larger settlement base that must have fed the monastic organisation of the site? This paper seeks to explore these queries more closely and attempts at finding clues to their answers.

Key words: Archaeology of Buddhism, Eastern India, Bengal, Moghalmari, Monastery, Xuanzang, Text, Materiality.

Leh Chos 'khor

Dr. Stanzin Mingur

Ladakh has several leftover ruins of Buddhist vihāras from its nearly hundred years of obscure period between the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries. Most of such ruins are along the bank of river Indus following a similar architectural style. Situation that leads to such obscurity was commonly experienced by the neighbouring kingdoms of Ladakh. Whatever situation might have occurred then, it leads to the destruction of those early vihāras leaving only a few which probably have remained hidden because of their location.

One such structure is in the vicinity of Gonpa village at the north of Leh city locally known as Lotsawa Choskhor. These ruins were reported by A. H. Francke and David Snellgrove before.

Between 2015 and 2016, the MAFIL (Franco-Indian Archaeological Mission in Ladakh), a cooperation project supported by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the French Institute in India, the Archaeological Survey of India and the Pethub Khangtsen Education Society worked at a Buddhist site. This structure has similar mud brick that we can see in temples of Nyarma complex and locally also believed to have been built by Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo (958--1055 CE). Only half of the inner surface of the temple was excavated and several fragmented body parts of clay images with painted colours like white, red, blue or green were

recovered. Looking at the fragmented part of the images, archaeologists think that the deities must have been of life-size.

Keyword: Chos 'khor, Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo, Leh

Structural Morphology of Mahabodhi Temple (Bodhgaya) In the Light of New Discovery

Dr. Shanker Sharma

Bodhgaya is revered by Buddhists especially for the Bodhi Tree beneath which Prince Siddhartha sat in meditation, achieved enlightenment and became the Buddha. After his mahaparinirvana, Bodhgaya flourished as an important religious centre and attracted pilgrims through the ages from different corners of the world. This led to the construction of numerous shrines, stūpas and monasteries; among them, the most magnificent is the towering Mahabodhi Temple. The temple is an important architectural marvel that withstood several onslaughts by marauding armies. The architectural history of the monuments, its authenticity and integrity has always been a topic for critical debate amongst historians and archaeologists alike.

The most arguable aspect of the Mahabodhi temple complex has been its antiquity of Diamond Throne (Vajrāsana or the Bodhimaṇḍa) and the temple itself. The author has been working for a decade to understand the archaeological layers and contextual vestiges of Mahabodhi temple. He has found a half portion of a stone vajrāsana in the precinct of the Mahabodhi temple. This is identical to another vajrāsana mentioned by the Chinese pilgrim and subsequently referred to by Alexander Cunningham and his contemporary R. L. Mitra which is presently kept in a small temple just located on the eastern outside of Mahabodhi temple complex.

In the light of several phenomenon issues related to discovery, excavations, conservation and restoration work for Mahabodhi temple, now it is become a big puzzle for researchers to consider the facts related to authenticity and integrity of the structural morphology of the Mahabodhi temple as well as about the vajrāsana or the place of bodhi maṇḍa. Hence, after tracing this new evidence of vajrāsana, we can rethink the fact of authenticity and contexts of the original vajrāsana of Mahabodhi temple which is the most sacred thing for the Buddhists in the whole world.

The important structural elements are the temple of Ashoka, Buddha's walk, railing of Ashoka's temple, Shunga stone railings, numerous stupas, miniature temples, tank and loose sculptures and many more. But the greatest event of Bodhgaya is the creation of the magnificent Mahabodhi Temple which became the hub of all activities since its existence. The region has received royal patronage from the Mauryan King Ashoka, Shungas, the Magadhan King Purnavarman, and the Burmese Kings. As the site was continuous under occupation up to the fifteenth century CE and thereafter it became abandoned up to the eighteenth century when the Burmese sent a mission for restoration work.

The history and archaeological layers suggest furious attacks over the Buddhist monks and institutions by the kings and rulers and the adverse climates since centuries ago perhaps destroyed some original context of the establishments. Hence, the archaeological layers suffered much at the hands of the time due to manmade miseries and natural calamities, and in due courses of landscaping and restoration activities carried out by Alexander Cunningham in cooperation with the Burmese Mission too.

Key words: Mahabodhi Temple, Bodhgaya, Vajrāsana, Bodhimāṇḍa

Adi Badri: A Little Known Tantric Buddhist Site of North India

Dr. Garima Kaushik

The little known archaeological site of Adi Badri is located in the north-eastern border of the modern day states of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. There is very little archaeological evidence for the presence of Buddhist sites in Haryana. Excavated some two decades ago, the site has revealed the remains of an elaborate monastic plan. The remains have been instrumental in identification of the Buddhist monastery and its sectarian affiliation.

This paper discusses in detail the significance of archaeological interpretation and identification of Tantric Buddhism, a subject that has received little attention from scholars. The site also reveals valuable information on the movement and transition of Buddhism as it travelled into the Himalayan region through Himachal Pradesh.

Key words: Adi Badri, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Monastery

Revisiting the Buddhist Archaeological Setting at Sopara, Maharashtra

Dr. Manish Rai

Sopara or Shurparaka is one of the oldest port towns in ancient India. It is strategically located on the Vaitarana and Ulhas rivers of the Konkan. This historical site represents a Buddhist settlement. According to the textual traditions, it came up around the fifth century BCE. This is further corroborated through the archaeological evidence at least from the third century BCE. The site subsequently emerged as the famous maritime silk routes of India. The cultural centre developed on the sea coast at a safer and secured place where Buddhist relics were enshrined in the mahāstūpa during the reign of the Mauryan King Ashoka i. e., in the third century BCE. Nala-Sopara locality has two archaeological mounds, the first mound is: Burud Kot or Buddhist mahāstūpa at Sopara and the second mound is locally known as Sonar Bhat (or ancient Sonarvat) at Gas. Another monument is a tank located at Bolinj. These sites are centrally protected monuments of the Archaeological Survey of India. It was also a cultural centre during the Satavahanas. It is mentioned in the inscriptions at Nashik, Naneghat, Kanheri, Karla caves etc.. Soparaka is mentioned in the Mahavamsa, Divyavadana, the Vanaparvan of Mahabharata, Sripalacharita and other Buddhist, Brahmanical, and Jain texts, as well as in the travelogues of foreign travellers. Soparaka was also known to Ptolemy and an anonymous writer of the Periplus of the Erythraean sea and later to Arab and Persian travellers.

The excavation carried out by Bhagawanlal Indraji in the last decade of the nineteenth century unearthed the remains of a Buddhist Stūpa and a relic casket enshrining the bronzes of the past Buddhas along with the Bodhisattva Maitreya and the remains of an earthen bowl believed to be the bhikṣāpātra of the Buddha. Later on, the Archaeological Survey of India carried out scientific excavations of the stūpa mound and unearthed the bricks of the Mauryan period, hence confirming the earliest establishment of the stūpa during the reign of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka. During the scientific clearance of the stūpa in the first decade of the twenty-first century, remains of votive stūpas, railing, and small brick stūpas were found. Although the remains of the Buddhist monastery were not yet unearthed from Sopara this ancient Buddhist site might have a monastery most possibly near Mahāstūpa which is mentioned in ancient literature and might be contemporary to the other early Buddhist monastic centres. Archaeological

remains are reported from the pre-Mauryan period to the third century CE and the ninth century CE to the fifteenth century CE but no archaeological remains were reported between the third to ninth century CE and later archaeological remains of the mediaeval and late mediaeval period were noticed.

This paper aims to discuss the finding of the excavations and recent scientific clearance work and explorations in and around the Vaitarana river valley and its adjacent area. It will help us to understand the rise, spread and extent of the Sopara to reconstruct the history of Sopara at least from the third century BCE to the twelfth century CE having almost 1500 years as an important Buddhist centre.

Key words: Konkan, Sopara, Stūpa, Silk road, UNESCO, Mauryas, Satavahanas.

Revisiting the Buddhist Monastic site at Nelakondapalli, Telangana

- **Dr. Shrikant Ganvir**

The region of the eastern Deccan comprising of present-day Telangana and Andhra Pradesh is known for its celebrated Buddhist monastic sites shedding light on the history of Buddhism in the region for more than a thousand years. Nelakondapalli is one of the prominent Buddhist sites of the eastern Deccan having the archaeological remains of colossal mahastūpa. In spite of the presence of a magnificent mahastūpa, this site has not been thoroughly investigated to comprehend its role in the dissemination of Buddhism in the Early Historic Deccan.

Nelakondapalli is located in Khmmam district, 20 kms from the district headquarters. On the outskirts of the village lies two huge ancient mounds, namely Viratarajudibba and Bairagulagutta. The excavation of these mounds was carried out by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Andhra Pradesh which unearthed the remains of mahastūpa and monastic complex.

Nine lime stone images of the Buddha were also unearthed from the excavations, which exhibit an influence of the Buddha images from Nagarjunakonda. The significant finding from the site includes a unique Buddhist bronze icon, earlier identified as an icon of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. A comparative study of this Bronze icon with the Buddhist bronzes of the Deccan will be carried out in the present paper to propose its identification as of the Buddha.

The present paper aims at probing the role of this Buddhist site in the dissemination of Buddhism in the eastern Deccan. The present paper will address few questions such as how this site emerged as an important Buddhist monastic centre? What was the nature of patronage for the establishment this Buddhist monastic centre? The present paper will also make an attempt to revisit the chronological framework of this Buddhist site taking into account archaeological, art-historical and epigraphic evidence. The present paper will also examine the nature of association of this Buddhist sites with contemporary thriving Buddhist sites such as Nagarjunakonda and Phanigiri.

Key words: Mahastūpa, bronze, Buddha images, monastery, Nagarjunakonda

Buddhist Archaeological Remains at Sirpur, Chhattisgarh

Dr. Saurabh Singh

Sirpur (21° 25'N, 82° 11'E) is a small village on the right bank of the Mahanadi river in the Mahasamund district of Chhattisgarh, approximately 85 km northeast of Raipur, the state capital. It is an important archaeological site dating from the sixth to tenth centuries CE. The ancient name of Sirpur was Śrīpura. Dr. M. G. Dixit excavated this archaeological site on the aegis of the Archaeological Survey of India from 1954 to 1957. Later on, A. K. Shrama again carried out excavation of this site on a large scale on the Aegis from 1999--2000 to 2003--04 and from 2004--05 to 2007--08.

In both excavations, ten Buddhist vihāras and one stūpa were recovered. In the first excavation, two vihāras were unearthed, namely Swastika vihāra and Ānandprabhu Kuṭivihāra, whereas in the second excavation, eight vihāras and one stūpa were unearthed including SRP-05 (Tivaradeva vihāra), SRP-10 (Padmapāṇi vihāra), SRP-04 (Harṣagupta vihāra), SRP-31 (Mūrtiśāla vihāra), SRP-32 (Bhikṣuṇi vihāra), SRP-01 (Buddhist vihāra), SRP-19 (Small Group of five vihāras), SRP-37 and one stūpa. The remains of Buddhist vihāras are notable for their architectural features and amply shed light on the Buddhist monastic architecture of Central India during the Early Medieval period.

Besides these structural remains, the archaeological excavations also yielded Buddhist stone sculptures and bronzes including images of Buddha, Bodhisattvas, Buddhist goddesses, votive stūpas etc. The monumental discovery of several Buddhist monasteries, stone sculptures, and bronzes has made Sirpur as one of

the important centres of Buddhism in India in general and of Mahāyāna and early Vajrayāna Buddhism in particular.

Excavation report of the first phase was not published, whereas a series of monographs on Buddhist architectural remains, sculptures, and bronzes of the second phase of excavations were independently published. Systematic attempts have not been made to locate Sirpur in the Buddhist sphere of ancient India.

The present paper aims at locating the place of Sirpur as an important Buddhist monastic centre of India during the Early Medieval period in spatio-temporal context based on the archaeological remains. The paper seeks out certain questions: how and when Sirpur emerged as a Buddhist monastic centre? Was this Buddhist monastic site interconnected with other contemporary Buddhist centres of ancient India? What was the role of political powers, Buddhist sangha and laity in the dissemination of Buddhism at the site? Do the Buddhist sculptural remains show any influence with the Buddhist art of other contemporary sites? The paper will highlight various aspects of the Buddhist site of Sirpur taking into account the architectural, art-historical, iconographic and epigraphic evidence to understand the significance of this Buddhist site in dissemination of Buddhism in Central India during the Early Mediaeval period.

Key words: Buddhism, Vihāra, Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna, Early Mediaeval, South Asia, Sirpur, Dakṣiṇa Kośala

Aragarh: An Excavated Early Historic Buddhist Site

Dr. Sunil Kumar Patnaik

The Buddhist remains on the top of Aragarh hill near Jatnai in Puri district, Odisha, were subjected for excavation by the Odishan Institute of Maritime and South East Asian Studies (OIMSEAS) during the years 2014–17. The hill as such spreads over an area of 105 acres and the core area where excavation was concentrated measures five acres. Horizontal excavations at the site laid bare the evidence of early stūpa remains. The stūpa has three terraces and the lowermost one measures 50 metre × 29 metre and the width is 7.25 metre, exposed on the southern side only, followed by another terrace having 29 metre × 21 metre in length served as circumambulatory path followed by another terrace which measures 28 metres. On the top of the terrace the circular base of the stūpa is found which measures 9.23 metre in circumference and the centre is filled with

murrum. The aṇḍa portion is not clear but might be a small one followed by a drum (medhī). The cultural sequence is from the third-second centuries BCE to the fifth-sixth centuries CE.

As is evident the stūpa was enlarged in three cultural phases and built in a form of diminishing terraces as at Lauriya-Nandangarh. This yielded around 191 railing pillars. 300 suchis have been found both in situ and scattered. The construction pattern of the stūpa matches well with the early stūpas of India like Satadhara and some other stūpas of the Deccan. Interestingly, there are four hills on either side of the river Daya namely Dhauli, Kukimunda, Labanagiri and Aragarh having Buddhist remains in clusters. The excavation unfolded one of the earliest stūpas in Eastern India which is a bench for the study of stūpa architecture in India.

The paper intends to focus upon the recent archaeological research on the site.

Key words: Aragarh, Stūpa, Lauriya-Nandangarh

New Buddhist Inscriptions of the Deccan region

- **Dr K. Munirathnam Reddy**

The Deccan region is well-known for its archaeological heritage including epigraphical treasure. The inscriptions of Early Historic period are engraved on rock-cut caves, religious monuments such as stūpas, vihāras, temples etc. Recent survey carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India has brought out many new inscriptions from the Deccan region. The decipherment and study of these Buddhist inscriptions from different archaeological sites in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangna, Karnataka and Maharashtra such as Kanaganahalli, Phanigiri, Kotapali, Pavani, Ghantasala, Munulu-Konda, Mukkataraopeta, Chebrolu, Nagarjunakonda, Chada, Anabi, Tripurantakam Gotur etc. have thrown new light on the political, religious and socio-economic aspects of the Early Historic Deccan. In addition to this, these inscriptions also provide vital information to comprehend multiple aspects of Buddhism in the Deccan such as patronage, nature of donations, Buddhist monasticism etc. Some of the inscriptions also shed new light on presence of the Satavahana kings from the region of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The present paper aims at discussing the contextual significance of these inscriptions to reconstruct the history of Buddhism in the Deccan during the Early Historical Period.

Key words:

Langudi: An Early Historic Buddhist Site of Eastern India

Dr. Sunil Kumar Patnaik

Located (20⁰.12' N and 86⁰43' E) on the right bank of river Kelua, a tributary of the Brahmani in Dharmasala area of Jajpur District, Odisha, is a hillock, a part of the Eastern Ghats which forms a part of Chhota Nagapur plateau. This hill again is encircled with a number of isolated hillocks such as Neulpur, Vajragiri, Kayama, Tarapur, Dhauri etc., all of which contain Buddhist remains. The site was excavated by the Odishan Institute of Maritime and South East Asian Studies (OIMSEAS) during 1996–2002 field seasons. The site as such has four distinctive areas such as mahāstūpa, rock-cut stūpas, rock-cut images and the monastery, so far brought to light. The most important aspects revealed from the site are the mahāstūpa of the third century BCE, emergence of the Buddha image in the first-second centuries CE, terracotta Buddha images, and the image of Ashoka. All this material evidence points to a narrative of early growth of Buddhism in Eastern India from the third century BCE to the seventh-eighth centuries CE. The site is a part of a greater culture-complex including Radhanagar and Kayama, located in close proximity. The beauty of the site is that it is a part of the early historic Buddhist settlement site of Radhanagar which throws a floodlight on the emergence of fortified city, evolution of image worship and inter- and intra-regional trade contact. The landscape can be comparable with those of Rajgir, Salihundam-Dantapura, Thotlakonda-Bavikonda etc. The site is another benchmark to understand early Buddhist theology, art and architecture of India.

The recent archaeological investigations at this site will be discussed in this paper.

Key words: Langudi, Odisha, Mahāstūpa, Monastery, Rock-cut images

Kesariya Stūpa: Reflections on the Enigma of Inspiration, Linkages and Character

- Dr. Sushma Trivedi

The colossal Kesariya stūpa marks a turning point in evolutionary history of the sacred edifice in terms of structural development as well as innovative adornment. Located in East Champaran district of Bihar, the site is still undergoing excavation and continues to produce spectacular facets of technical and design advancements. Stylistically it is among the few stupas having square base, tiered terraces and receding prominence of the aṇḍa. Shrine cells with Buddha images is another unique feature of the site.

This study investigates into cultural significance and religious interpretation of the monument. Emergence of new architectural features are probed in a broader perspective. Sectarian affiliation of this stūpa is re-examined and prevailing assumptions are challenged on the basis of dichotomy between text and context.

Key words:

Rock-cut Buddhist Sculptures at Deogarh, Uttar Pradesh

- Rahul Maurya

Deogarh is an archaeological site, well-known for the Dashavatara temple, which is dated to the sixth century CE, is located in Lalitpur district of Uttar Pradesh. Deogarh and its vicinity have preserved the archaeological remains of three major religious traditions: Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism. Some rock-cut images are carved on the right side of the Betwa river valley, which are located 4 km away, towards the south-western direction of the Dashavatara temple. The valley has a few interesting Buddhist images which are probably dated to the fifth-sixth centuries CE. M. C. Joshi (2017) published these Buddhist rock-cut sculptures. These images include Buddha sculptures, depictions of Mara vijaya, miracles of Shravasti and Sankissa, and Bodhisattva Padmapani. The Mara vijaya panel is intricately carved depicting the details of this episode according the textual sources. The Buddha images exhibit different mudras such as dhammachakrapravartana and abhaya mudra. The present paper aims at examining the iconographic development of the Buddhist images at the site in spatio-temporal context. These images can also be compared with contemporary

Buddhist images of other regions of India to understand stylistic and iconographic development of these images to place them in a chronological framework and also to locate them in a wider context of the Buddhist iconography of Central India. The art-historical analysis of these images will facilitate to reconstruct the history of Buddhism in the region. On the basis of the tentative chronology of the Buddha images, it can be inferred that this site emerged as a Buddhist establishment during the fifth-sixth centuries CE.

Key words:

Phanigiri: Unearthing the history of Buddhism in Telangana

- **P. Nagaraju and Dr. Shrikant Ganvir**

Phanigiri village is located in Nagaram Mandal of Suryapet District in Telangana state. The village lies on the left bank of the rivulet Aleru, a tributary of the River Musi. The remains of Buddhist monastic site are located on the hill-top, located towards northern direction around 1.5 km from the village. Numerous Buddhist monastic sites in the eastern Deccan along the ancient trade routes, on the banks of rivers and in the coastal region had emerged and subsequently flourished during the Early Historical period under the patronage of dynasties such as the Satavahanas and Ikshvakus as well as of traders and laity. One of the significant epigraphic evidence is an inscription of the Ikshvaku ruler Rudrapurushadatta (18th regnal year, early fourth century CE) which further confirms that this monastic centre had got a significant place in Buddhist setting. This site was excavated by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Andhra Pradesh and later on by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Telanagna. Recently, this site was again jointly excavated by Department of Heritage Telangana and Deccan College Post Graduate & Research Institute. The archaeological excavations unearthed the remains of remains of mahāstūpa, memorial stūpas, apsidal chaityagrihas, circular chaityagrihas, octagonal structure (bodhighara?), mandapas, and vihāras. The archaeological remains at this site and its hinterland further shed light on Buddhist monasticism of the eastern Deccan.

The present paper will examine the emergence and dissemination of this Buddhist monastic site in spatio-teomporal context. The present paper aims at discussing the nature of Buddhist monasticism at the site, Buddhist rituals and worship

patterns, pattern of royal patronage and also community patronage, traders and occupational groups and, chronological framework. It also aims at comprehending the association ship of this Buddhist monastic site with other Buddhist sites in its hinterland.

Key words: *Mahāstūpa, chaityagr̥ha, stūpa, vihāra, Satavahanas, Ikshvakus*
