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Cover image: A hoard of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain found in a scientific clearance at St. Augustine Complex, Goa

Inner Cover image (History and Archaeology): Sculpture of Durga, Mahabalipuram (courtesy: Aprajita Sharma)

Inner Cover image (Museums): Devi, National Museum (courtesy: Aprajita Sharma)

Inner Cover image (Heritage and Culture): Gargoyle, Chattrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai (courtesy: Prashant Banerjee, Researcher, Columbia University)

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

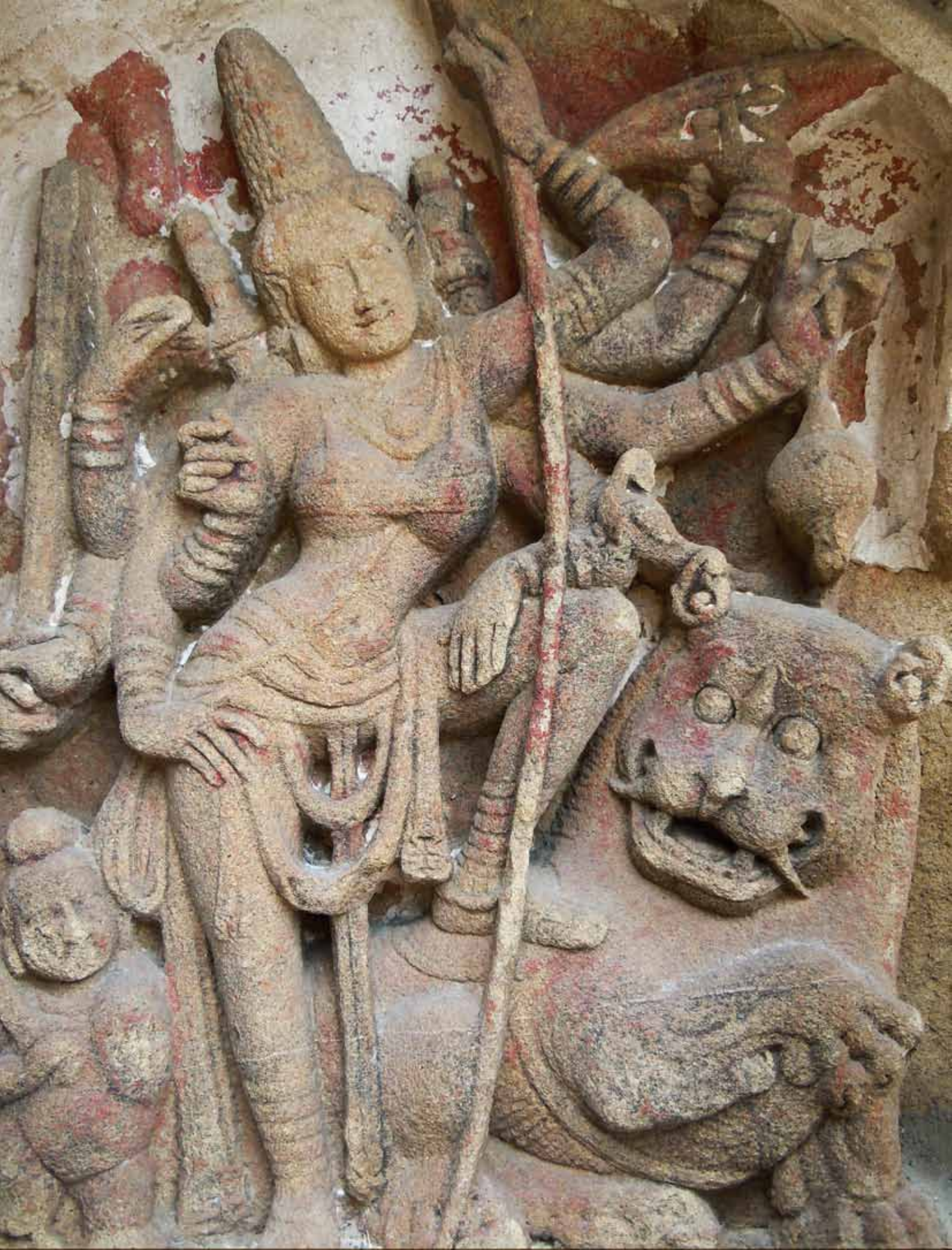
In conservation field today, the focal point of professionals is related to appropriate intervention on any work of art or heritage. It is no doubt the main concern of conservation process but there are lots of factors which don't get assessed before planning or doing any intervention. For instance- the impact of repeating interventions on the same area, or making different interventions on the same spot without knowing its long term implications. Such interventions always make an impact on our environment and also on the conservation work. Though it is seen that this aspect is often ignored. We are becoming evermore aware of our carbon footprint and indeed carbon is mainly responsible for the climate change. We tend to forget that there are many processes that could be more eco-friendly, such as the laser technology, than most of our usual professional practices. The technological revolution that our society is going through has had a positive influence on our methodologies and even some of our techniques. However conservation practice in workshops has not changed that much in past few decades. In fact, new equipment and materials may be available to us but the practical work is still performed in the same basic ways.

The lack in planning and creation of concept ideas which decides the nature of intervention is also becoming a huge problem now a day. Today the implementing agencies have funds and targets to achieve for making India a great place to visit and exploration for tourists, as the glorious heritage leaves people spellbound, but at the same point the lack of experts and experienced professionals to make that happen judiciously, is not seen.

A systematic and well organized managerial structure is a must now a days, so that every person of the group knows his role and responsibilities. Such orderly layout of organization has a proper channel of communication which results in harmonious distribution of information, processes and workload. The persons know what is going to be implemented and if anyone has a problem with it, one can discuss the issue and find the most optimum way to achieve it. Such planning minimizes the risk of negative impact on our heritage and furthermore proves to be economical in terms of time, money and manpower.

It would be interesting to assess the consequences of our profession on the environment, on the society and even on the economy. The study of these aspects is still at a teething stage. We lack much information which may be required to make decisions and to take on responsibility for more conscientious practices. Young professionals are on an advantage to make most out of these opportunities and boost the image as heritage conservators.

Gurpreet Singh



History and Archaeology

Water Harvesting Structures in Gujarat (During Medieval Times)

[1]R.N. Kumaran and [2]M. Saranya

Introduction

In continuation of the previous article on "Water Harvesting Structures in Gujarat - up to Early Historic Times", published in *Heritage and Us* (Year 3; Issue 2), the present article covers the medieval period of Gujarat. The hundreds of water harvesting structures belonging to this period are varied in nature. They mainly consist of simple well (with or without steps), multi-storied stepwells , stepped ponds and tanks. Apart from the royals, even the local population has shown interest in raising as well as maintaining stepwells.

1. Simple Well with Steps

Simple wells are generally circular or square in shape with or without steps to descend. They are usually dug deep into the earth for reliable perennial groundwater. They are lined with either bricks or stones, with or without mortar and the water is drawn using ropes and pulleys which are pulled by the bullocks.

Helical Stepwell, Champaner, Pavagadh

The well is situated at the foot hill of Pavagadh near the town of the same name (fig. 1). Laid in north-south orientation, with an entrance in the south, this simple stepwell mainly consists of the shaft of the well, a short entrance and a spiral staircase that descends to the bottom. The diameter of

fig. 1 Helical stepwell: Champaner, Pavagadh

this brick made well is 19 m while the steps, 1.20 m broad, are provided with stone. The entrance staircase is 1.50 m broad and 4 m long. The stairs descend for 2 m and reaches a small platform from where the spiral stairway begins. A parapet wall of 1 m is provided all along the well.

Bhamaria Well, Mehamadabad, Kheda

The Bhamaria well (fig. 2) is cut into rock during the time of Sultan Mahmud Begada (1459-1511 CE). The main architectural elements are the octagonal shaft of the well and the chambers attached to it. These chambers have open windows towards the well shaft and are circular above ground level. The sides in front of the spiral staircases have narrow arched windows. These staircases lead to a lower storey intended to be used as a cool retreat during the summer months. The octagonal shaft is actually set into a square while the corners are occupied by winding staircases.

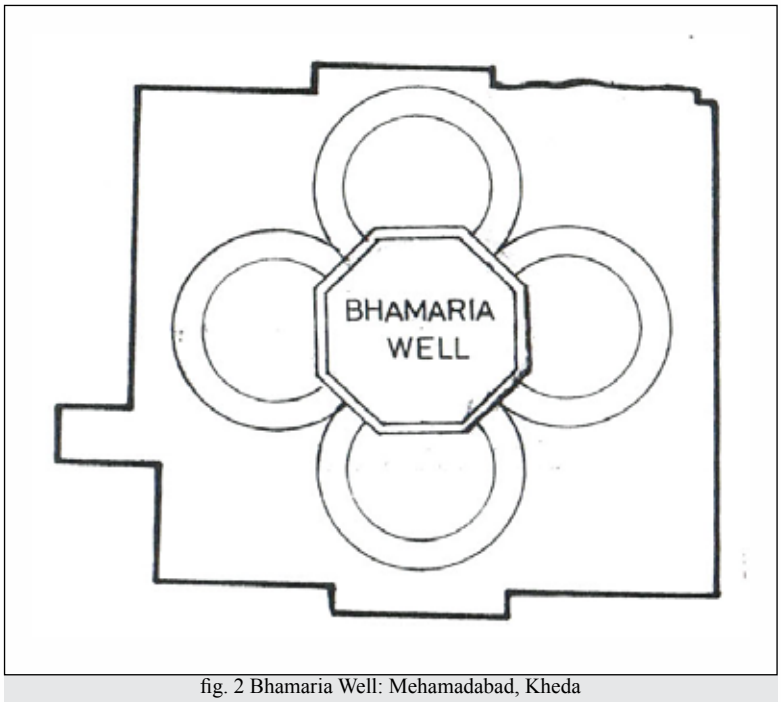


fig. 2 Bhamaria Well: Mehamadabad, Kheda

2. Multi-storied Stepwells

Stepwells, or *Vav* as they are locally called, are wells or ponds in which the water may be reached by descending a set of steps. According to Wikipedia, 'Stepwells usually consist of two parts - a vertical shaft from which water is drawn and the surrounding inclined subterranean passageways, chambers and steps which provide access to the well. The galleries and chambers surrounding these wells were often carved profusely with elaborate detail and became cool, quiet retreats during the hot summers'. These multi-storied stepwells are almost linear in design and are barely visible from the surface.

Rani-ki-Vav, Patan

Rani-ki-Vav (fig. 3) is situated two km northwest of Patan, ancient Anhilvada, and lies on the left bank of the River Saraswati. This stepwell was constructed by Rani Udayamati, the consort of Bhimadeva-I (1022-1063 CE) of Solanki dynasty.

fig. 3 Rani-ki-Vav: Patan

It measures 64 m long, 20 m wide and 27 m deep and is laid out in the east-west orientation with a well located in the east. It is raised with bricks and covered with stones. It has seven stepped corridors beginning at the ground level and leading down to the kund. The roof of the top storey of each pavilion can be reached up to the ground level. The shaft of the well is highly ornamented with intricate carvings. The sculptures in the niches represent *apsaras, nagkanyas, yoginis* in various moods along with the sculptures of Hindu pantheon. The minute and exquisite carving of the largest and most splendid Vav is one of the finest specimens of its kind. Befitting its name, the Rani-ki-Vav is now considered to the 'Queen among Stepwells of India'.

Mata Bhavani Stepwell, Ahmedabad

The Mata Bhavani stepwell (fig. 4) is located in Asarva, a suburb of Ahmedabad that lies in the vicinity of the Dada Harir stepwell. The well derives its name from a small shrine dedicated to Mata Bhavani which is built inside the complex. Constructed in the 11th century CE, it is one of the earliest existing stepwells. It is a simple monument with a square pool in front of the well. A long flight of steps lead to the water below a sequence of three-storied open pavilions positioned along the east-west axis. The elaborate ornamentation on the columns, brackets and beams are a prime example of how stepwells were used as a form of art.

fig. 4 Mata Bhavani Stepwell: Ahmedabad

Rudabai Stepwell, Adalaj

Rudabai stepwell (fig. 5) is situated on the northern outskirts of the village of Adalaj, on a caravan route from Ahmedabad to Patan. According to the inscription on one of the niches of last floor, written in Sanskrit language and Devanagari script, this stepwell was built by Ruda, or Rujha, Queen of King Rana Veer Singh, when Mahmud Begada was Sultan in 1499 CE.

fig. 5 Rudabai Stepwell: Adalaj

This stepwell lies in north-south orientation with three entrances of which the main one from the south leads to the stepped corridor. These three entrances are made in the first underground storey, which has an octagonal opening on the top, the platform rests on 16 pillars, eight of which stand at the corners of the octagon. The 76 m long linear stepwell goes five storeys below the ground level. The stepped corridor descends with four pavilion-towers. It has two wells, one that functions as a pool with steps on each side enabling access and use by the people and the other that functions as a vertical well with a diameter of seven meters, from which water can be drawn from the top.

Pillars and pilasters are plain and simple as compared to the walls and pavilions, which have carvings on the columns, beams, stone railing and balconies. Walls are decorated with medallions, floral and scroll motifs with *kirtimukhas*. The depictions on the panel are King sitting on a stool under a parasol attended by two Chauri-Bearers; erotic scenes; churning buttermilk; combing hair; Bhairava; dancing girls and musicians; a girl with a parrot, Ganesha, Hanuman, Vishnu, and Mother Goddesses. The niches with floral ornamentation depict petals, or occasionally a rosette-like medallion, from which an elongated pot is hanging, on one or three chains.

The stepwell is a good example for Indo-Islamic architecture. According to a Sanskrit inscription on marble slab set into a niche in the first storey records that five lakhs of tankas were spent for this construction and the mason was Marana, the son of Bhima.

Asapuri ni Vav, Ahmedabad

Asapuri ni Vav (fig. 6) is located on the southern outskirts of Ahmedabad. This Vav derives its name from the Asapuri, the mother-goddess temple situated nearby and was built around 1459-1513 CE.

fig. 6 Asapuri ni Vav: Ahmedabad

The stepwell is laid out in a north-south orientation with the entrance in the north. It has four pavilion-towers, the last one of which is a broad surrounding passage around a square pond. It is similar in architectural structure and ornamentation to the Rudabai stepwell of Adalaj, except that it has a square plan. At the bottom of the shaft, there is a square pool, which becomes circular at a lower level. The water in the pool can be reached by a semi-circular stairway on both sides.

Dada Harir Stepwell, Asarva, Ahmedabad

The Dada Harir stepwell (fig. 7), also called Bai Harir, is situated in the village of Asarva, north-east of the old city. Constructed in the reign of Sultan Mahmud Begada around 1499 CE, this stepwell is laid in the east-west direction with the entrance in the east. It has five storeys and five pavilion towers. Two intermediate frameworks support the sidewalls at the fourth and fifth staircases. The structures above ground level are limited to the entrance pavilion, two small canopies over the entrance of the spiral staircases at the fifth pavilion-tower and a low parapet wall surrounding the stepped corridor, the octagonal shaft and the well (Jain 1981: 38).

fig. 7 Dada Harir Stepwell: Asarva, Ahmedabad

Chaturmukhi Stepwell, Chobari, Surendranagar

Chaturmukhi stepwell is situated outside the village Chobari. The ground plan is constructed like a regular cross with four entrances. The well is situated in the middle of the structure, where this point is broadened to a square. Due to this, the well is wide and often described as a pond (kund). At each end, a narrow corridor with steps is attached in order to lead down to the water level. Further, a pavilion was also noticed in the south.

3. Kunds/ Stepped Ponds

Stepped ponds are usually rectangular or square in shape with series of steps descending to the centre. They always built to accompany a nearby temple and open to sky.

Suraj Kund, Modhera

Suraj kund (fig. 8) is rectangular in shape and was part of the Surya temple built around 1026 CE. It is the most beautiful of its kind in India with a broad stairway in the middle of the western side leads up to the temple. Small flights of steps on either side interspersed with miniature shrines give the tank indescribable elegance.

fig. 8 Suraj Kund: Modhera

Kund, Vijapur, Mehsana

The kund at Vijapur is rectangular in shape with graded series of steps to reach the water level. It is simple in style having four stepped entrances in four cardinal directions. This kund belongs to 13th-14th century CE.

Ajpal Kund, Vadnagar, Mehsana

The Alpaj kund is square in shape with graded series of steps on four sides. The main entrance is toward the western side and the walls are adorned with brahmanical deities. It belongs to circa 18th century CE.

4. Talav/ Pond

According to Wikipedia, 'a pond is a body of standing water, either natural or man-made, that is usually smaller than a lake. They may arise naturally in floodplains as part of

a river system, or they may be somewhat isolated depressions. Usually they contain shallow water with marsh and aquatic plants and animals. Humans also make ponds. A wide variety of manmade water bodies are classified as ponds.'

Mansar Talav, Viramgam, Ahmedabad

The Mansar Talav (fig. 9) is irregular in shape, but resembles a conch shell and is surrounded by flight of steps leading down to the water. Originally there were 520 small shrines above the steps or ghat, each with its subsidiary shrines. Presently only 357 are left. The shrines are of Vaishnav and Saiva sect. The lake was constructed by Miyanal Devi, mother of King Siddharaja Jayasimha in about 1100 CE. Thus it is of the same time as Sahasralinga talav.

fig. 9 Mansar Talav: Viramgam, Ahmedabad

Sahasralinga Talav, Mehsana

Sahasralinga Talav (fig. 10) is situated two km north-west of Patan, the ancient Anhilvada. It was originally known as Durlabh Saravor and constructed by King Durlabharaja and was repaired and renovated by King Siddharaja

fig. 10 Sahasralinga Talav: Mehsana

during 1093-1143 CE. This is one of the biggest tanks of the Solanki Period. The inlet to this talav is from river Saraswati in the deep Rudra Kupa and it was allowed to run through the channels in the stone inlet and then into the circular tank. Nearly thousand temples were constructed in-between inlet and Rudra Kupa which can be approached through the bridge, as the water was flowing all around the temples.

The excavation conducted by Sastry (1936: 15-16) has revealed basement with steps, columns fixed in a concrete floor which formed the bed of the reservoir between two structures. The basement is rectangular in shape measuring 65m east-west and 65m north-south. After a length of 36 m on the north-south alignment it turns at right angle towards the east and then covers a space of 12 m in length and again north with steps to a length of 49 m to the north. On the basis of the exposed structures, it can be inferred that the reservoir could be circular and seems to be many sided. Further a ring well was noticed in the centre for de-siltation.

Malav Talav, Dholka, Ahmedabad

Malav tank was constructed during the reign of Siddharaja Jayasimha of the Solanki dynasty. It was dedicated to his mother Minal Devi. The tank is surrounded by flights of steps and ghats. One can reach the centre of the tank through a stone bridge where ruins of temples are seen.

Inlet to Kankaria Tank, Ahmedabad

Inlet to Kankaria tank (fig. 11) is situated a kilometer to the south-east of Raipur gate and is a regular polygon of thirty-four sides. The inlet on the east side is finest example of its kind and at each end of the temple is a buttress similar to mosque minarets. The face is divided into many facets vertically. The central projection on these facets has recessed panels, with floral tracery. The entire structure is a fine combination of engineering skill and art. The construction of the

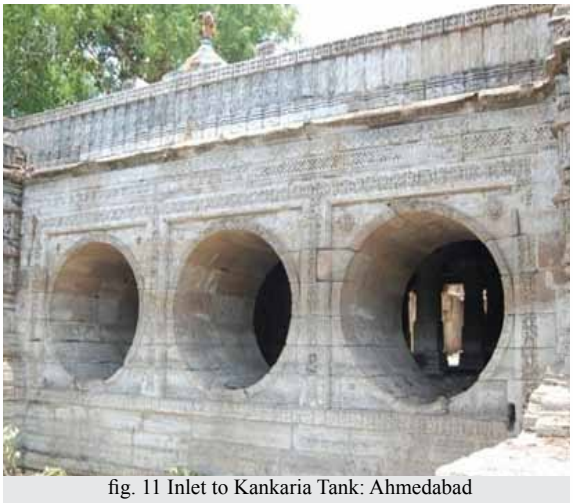


fig. 11 Inlet to Kankaria Tank: Ahmedabad

tank was started by Sultan Qutubudin during his life time and was completed by his son in 1451 CE.

Great Tank, Sarkhej Roza, Ahmedabad

The great tank (fig. 12) was constructed by Mahmud Begada and it is fed by a channel to the west of the mosque. It was designed by two architects namely Azam and Muazzam (1457 CE). The sluice gate of the tank is richly carved. The tank is surrounded by a double storied palace with two entrances with a harem on the south-west corner.

fig. 12 Great Tank: Sarkhej Roza, Ahmedabad

Apart from the above, some of the inscriptions found in Gujarat speak of both royals and public not only constructing the stepwells but also making provisions for the maintenance of the same. Although, these inscriptions embellish the actual stepwells, they are mostly removed from their actual place and reused. However, the historical informations revealed from these inscriptions are interesting. Most of them were bilingual mentioned in Vikrama and Saka era. Some of the important ones are mentioned below:

Inscriptions on stepwells

A bilingual inscription engraved on a marble slab fixed into the western wall of the village kunda in Gujarati and Sanskrit dated in Vikrama 1599 (1541 CE) from Sabli, Sabarkantha

records the construction of a tank for public utility by Batkauri, sister of Jivani, the queen in the reign of Maharajadiraja Bharamalla son of Bhimabhupa of Bhanu-bhupala line (*IAR* 1977-78: 68). Another inscription dated in Vikrama 1612 (1554 CE), refers to the reign of Sri Pum-jaraja, the son of Bharamall and states that his queen Pratapadevi, popularly known as Ruda, built the stepwell on the highway for the welfare of the wayfarers (*IAR* 1983-84: 149).

Apart from the royals, the inscription mentions that the public also dug the stepwell. One inscription belonging to the reign of Maharayaraya Sri Bharamall, records the commencement of the digging up of a stepwell in Vikrama 1599 (1541 CE) and its completion in Vikrama 1600 (1542 CE), by Vyasa Sri Pindara and Vyasa Sri Gopala who were the sons of Vyasa Sri Srinatha and his wife Baisri Sahijalade for the satisfaction of all the living beings and welfare of one hundred one generations of their forefathers. One inscription dated in Vikrama 1256 (1198 CE) in Sanskrit language and Nagari characters records the renovations of a stepwell called 'Suryavapi' by Vikramasvami, son of the Brahmana Somesvara and his wife Nagasri along with the pedigrees of Vikramasvami from his father's and mother's side. It also mentions that Sambala, son of Devadhara was the architect. A temple inscription, dated in Saka 1782 (1860 CE) records the renovation of the temple of Mahadeva Sri-Mudhanesvaradeva by Mahanta Sri Khema-Bharathi (ti), Bakhata-Bharati along with the renovation of a stepwell, the construction of which was commenced in Vikrama 1904 (1846 CE) and completed in Vikrama 1916 (1858 CE) during the rule of Maharaja Sri Javansinghji of Iddalapura.

Another inscription dated in Vikrama 1532 and Saka 1397 (1475 CE) mentions a gift of twenty dramas by a lady for the maintenance of a stepwell built in the village Gora(ni)li during the reign of Bhanu-I (*IAR* 1983-84: 149).

Inscriptions on Tank/Kund

A stone inscription from Jinand Kund in Surendranagar, datable to 12th century CE in Sanskrit refers to a queen belonging to 'Malwa Maharastra' who has constructed a pond for the benefit of the people (*IAR* 1991-92: 115). The one from the village Lakhond in Kachchh engraved in local dialect in Nagari characters dated in Vikrama 1675 (1617 CE)

from a mosque records the digging up and construction of a tank by Rau Sri Raji and Kamanbai (*IAR* 1982-83: 151). Another tank inscription from Porbandar dated in Vikrama 1886 and Saka 1750 (1828 CE) records the construction of a tank called Bhojasara in Sudamapura (i.e. Porbandar) by Roopalibai, the mother of Maharana Sri Vikramatajit of Jeshta-vamsa. This inscription also mentions about the masons like Magha, Aila, Samaji, Morar and Makana of the Visvakarma family who built the tank (*IAR* 1979-80: 85).

Inscriptions on Well

An inscription from a well found at Godhra, Panchmahals, records the erection of a mosque and construction of a well at Muhammadabad alais Champaner in AH 905 (1499-1500 CE) by Sultan Mahmud I (*IAR* 1968-69: 54). A metrical inscription from Bharuch composed by Madhav records the construction of a well by Lai Das, son of Tai Gob(v) ardhan in AH 1100 (1698-99 CE) (*IAR* 1974-75: 61).

Discussions

The construction of well or any form of water structures was considered as a pious act since Early Historic times. The erection of simple well with steps led to the multi-storied highly ornate stepwells. Its gradual development from the Harappan site Dholavira down to the late medieval period can be traced in Gujarat. The main reason for building of varied water structures is to deal with the fluctuating and unseasonal rainfall. Large number of stepwells and tanks in Gujarat clearly tells us the necessity of storing water. Even the Muslim and Mughal rulers built many stepwells in Gujarat. The bilingual inscriptions of various local rulers and commoners clearly indicate the tradition of raising the stepwell was in vogue till last century.

Today, even the State Government is taking initiatives in replenishing the ground water through ‘Sujalam Sufalam Project’. Through this project, bunds were raised and small dams were built in the vacant land to store the rain water. This had invariably increased the water table.

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Archaeology of Gharapuri (Elephanta) Island from Inscribed and Written Records

[1]Manish Rai

Introduction

The Gharapuri Island (18º56'20"N; 72º55'50"E) or simply puri means a 'fortress city', locally known as Elephanta is located about six nautical miles from Gateway of India, Mumbai, in the Arabian Sea (fig. 13). The island was continuously inhabited from the Early Historic times, as evident from the brick stupa of 2nd century BCE, to till date. Apart from *stupas* and caves, explorations on this island have revealed many inscribed materials. Interestingly, this island was mentioned in the inscriptions of Pulakesin II and Dandidurga, when it was under their control. In the present paper, an attempt to interpret the archaeology of the site has also been made based on the accounts of Diogo de Couto, a famous Portuguese historian who visited this place in 1559.

fig. 13 Gharapuri (Elephanta) Island

Coins

The island has reported a number of coins of various dynasties from the time-to-time, such as Satavahana (1st century CE), Kshatrapas (2nd-4th century CE),

and Kalachuris (5th-6th century CE). These coins are mostly circular or square in shape and are of copper or lead. One of the copper coins reveal three hills with four Brahmi letters but only *'ya'* was decipherable on the obverse, while the reverse was heavily encrusted. On the second coin, the obverse is depicted with Sri Krishnaraja within dotted border while the reverse with Couchant Nandi facing left. A lead coin on which the obverse is depicted with three arched hill while the reverse with a chakra within dotted circle was also obtained (Tripati and Gaur 1997: 73-83).

The copper coins of Kalachuri's reveal the name of the king Sri Krishnaraja in Brahmi script with altar below all enclosed by a dotted circle on the obverse, while couchant Nandi facing left was depicted on the reverse (Gokhale 1976: 89-91). These coins are circular in shape with a diameter of 1.02 to 1.5 cm and weighs around 0.950 to 1.30 gm. Similar coins were also reported from Morabandar (Tripati and Gaur 1997: 73-83).

Seal

A small oval shape carnelian seal was discovered by Fergusson in 1869 from the eastern hill. It measures 0.435 cm in length and 0.35 in breadth and bears a legend *Narayana* of 5th-6th century CE. It was in possession of the late Dr Bhau Daji Lad but now its whereabouts are unknown (Shastri 1934: 23).

A Votive Jar of Copper

A copper jar was discovered from the large water cistern of the western wing of main cave during the clearance in 1924-25 CE (fig. 14). An inscription around the neck in Sanskrit language reveals that 'in the Samvat year 1143, the cyclic year Kshaya, on the 14th day of the bright fortnight of Chaitra here in the district (1) of Sripuri of the goddess Jogeshvari (this vessel) was made out

fig. 14 Votive jar of copper with a short Sanskrit inscription, c. 1086 CE

of 194 palas of copper' (Shastri 1934: 22). *Pala* is one of the ancient Indian weight measurement units. One *pala* is equal to 35 grams which means the weight of the copper jar would be around 6790 gm. The original inscription reads as -

[Oh] Samvat 114(3 Ksha)ya samvasra(tam) Chaitra-sudha (sudi)

14 Sripuri vina(sha)yetraya Sri-Jogeshvani (ri) deeyah

tantra(mta) palas(*)194

Lohikrilla (tah) (II) (fig. 15)

fig. 15 Inscription in Devanagri script and Sankrit language carved on the copper jar

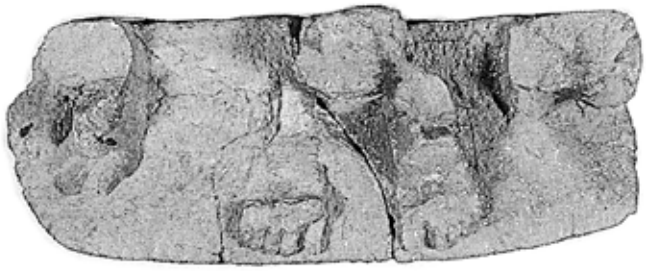
Overall, it can be inferred from the inscription that Shripuri is the name of the locality, possibly the original name of the Elephanta island along with a date equivalent to 1086 CE.

Copperplates

A pair of inscribed copperplates was found during clearance of earth in the north-eastern corner of the island. It is believed to be in the possession of Harold Smith, a contractor who had carried them to England in 1865 CE (Michell 2002: 131)

Inscribed Stone Image

An inscribed pedestal was noticed in front of the Brahma image at Elephanta. As the inscription was mostly worn out, Shastri (1934: 21) has deciphered as *'Baldari Pratitha Shiva---Rasamikami'* meaning 'consecrated by Baladari….Shiva' (fig. 16). On paleographic grounds this inscription can be assigned to 9th century CE.



Fragment of the pedestal found near main cave

Later inscription on the pedestal:
बळदारी प्रतिष्ठा शिव …रसामिकमि

Consecrated by Baladari…..Siva

fig. 16 Stone pedestal with an inscription

Other Inscriptions

Inscription of Meguti Temple at Aihole of Chalukaya Pulakeshin-II (634 CE)

An inscription in the Meguti Temple at Aihole mentions that Pulakesin II (610-642 CE) had invaded Puri, the capital and the coast town of the Mauryas, with hundreds of ships as large as rutting elephants. The Mauryan ruler was probably killed in the encounter and his kingdom was annexed. Further, the inscription also mentions that North Konkan and the Nasik came under the direct rule the Chalukaya. This was further confirmed by his copperplate grant discovered in Nasik (Pathak 2000). Pulakesin II, called it as 'the Goddess of fortune of the Western Ocean'. This is because of its strategic position on the trade route and was the first port of call after a long journey on the ocean and the ships are required to pay for the breathing. Due to this, the island became very wealthy.

Manor Inscription (Plate) of Dandigurga, Saka year 671 (749-750 CE)

The Manor Inscription mentioned about the pilgrimage of Dantidurga (735-756 CE) to the Brahma Temple at Puri (Gharapuri) and further records the grant of village Tambasahika (modern Tamsahi near Manor) in favour of the temple at Sripura. The scholars had identified Sripura near Manor as Puri or Gharapuri (Desai 2002: 235)

Foreign Accounts

Diogo de Couto was a famous Portuguese historian who travelled to India in 1559 CE and stayed for a decade. He visited the island in the same year and his accounts were published in 1603 CE as Da Asia Decada and the same accounts were made available by Fletcher. (Berkson 1999: 42) Couto was the first one to mention about a stone plaque with an inscription which no one could decipher in India at that time. The same was removed from the gate of these caves and sent to the Portuguese king, D John III by the Portuguese viceroy of India, Dom Joao de Castro, around 1540 CE. The Portuguese King also failed in his endeavour to decipher it (Michell 2002: 114-115).

According the Shastri, 'the Portuguese went to this pagoda and removed a famous stone over the entrance that had an inscription of large and well-written characters which was sent to King D. John III. The King also used his entire effort but without any effect, and the stone thus remained there and now there is no trace of it' (Shastri 1934: 20-21). The said inscription is not traceable till date. Therefore nothing can be said for certain. Qureshi (2010) mentions that 'it is most probable that the inscription was in Brahmi script and if there was any chance of its decipherment then that could only be happened in India but not in Portugal. However, it is also possible that the stone was sent as a trophy or souvenir as there were few inscription found in his estate'.

Hector MacNeil mentions about a Persian inscription during his visit in 1783 CE, however, William Erskine who visited Elephanta in 1813 CE was unable to locate this inscription.

Conclusions

The scholars had identified the Shripuri with the Gharapuri as variously mentioned in the inscriptions and other materials. These inscribed materials like coins, seals, inscriptions,

inscribed sculpture and votive jar, all revealed that the island was continuously inhabited from the 2nd century BCE, when the brick *stupa* was built here. They also revealed that the island was under the occupation of various rulers due to its strategic importance in the western seaboard. Of these inscribed materials, the carnelian seal reveals an interesting data on the influence of Vaishnavism in the Island around 5th-6th century CE where, sculptures of the Vishnu were carved in the various panels of main deity, Shiva. The combination of Buddhism, Saivism and Vaishnavism, all reveal the composite culture of Gharapuri Island.

Above all, the above research firmly established the archaeology of Gharapuri (Elephanta) Island going back to 2nd century BCE.

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Putali Barao - A Classic Example of Water Management System under Yadavas of Deogiri

[1]Tejas Garge

The Indian subcontinent has a long history of evidence for artificial management of water through reservoirs witnessed in architectural remains unearthed related to the Harappa civilisation - the Great Bath at Mohenjo-daro (Marshall 1931: 131-150), series of large scale water reservoirs at Dholavira (Bisht 2005). In peninsular India much of the irrigation right from the Neolithic period was by means of rainwater ponds and water reservoirs, while in the north the stress was more on 'regulation canals', linked to the rivers. The evidence of this kind from historical period is the Sites 93 of Nagarjunkonda, under the Iksvakus, where two ornamental tanks are reported, provided with underground drains, besides a number of wells and paved cisterns, the square stepped tank with arrangement for overflow of water - the extra water was diverted through a passage on the top joining a very long underground drain. It had originally a wooden superstructure adorned internally with lamps, hooks, and so on. A tortoise-shaped tank connected with an underground drain on either side with two square wells and soak-pits was also reported close to it on the south (Sarkar and Misra 1972: 20). They must have provided a model to the later rulers like the Chera, Cholas, Pandyas, Pallavas and Kadambas.

The Hathigumpa inscription of Kharavela on the Udaygiri-Khandagiri hills mentions the construction of embankments to several deep and cool tanks, restoration of gardens, etc. in the very first year of his accession. The Girnar (Junagadh) rock inscriptions provide a graphic account of the great Sudarsana-tadaka which was built by Rastriya Pusyagupta with earthen and stone embankment during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya. It gave way before a devastating storm but was repaired by Mahaksatrapa Rudradaman (150 CE). After another collapse it was repaired again in the reign of Skandagupta (Fleet 1888: 56).

At Kankali-tila, the site of the ancient Jaina stupa at Mathura, an impressive tank complex 35 x 35 m, of Pd IV, 1st to 3rd century CE has been exposed. The tank is cut into the natural soil to a depth of about 3.96 m from the original ground surface; it mainly consists of a central pool, 9.10 x 8.10 m, attached to a ramp amidst its e. side and oblong and irregular ancillary compartments. A water tank made of burn bricks is also reported from Kushana levels in excavations at Shringverpur, Uttar Pradesh by B.B. Lal on the banks of the river Ganga. The tank has been partitioned into three small tanks - A, B and C. The water from the river was allowed to fill in tank A through a channel. After sometime it was transferred into tank B when the sedimentation process cleared the water to a considerable extent. Further sedimentation process in tank B filtered the river water and finally it was transferred to tank C.

A water reservoir in the levels of the 2nd century CE has been reported at the site known as Vanagiri, Kaveripattanam. This had an inlet channel also connected with the river Kaveri. Construction of tanks was common during the Kadamba (Panchamukhi 1974: 50) and Pallava periods. The Kadamba king Ravivarman built a tank in the village Variyaka, whereas Kakusthavarman excavated a reservoir (tadakani) at Talagunda. The Chalukya and Rastrakuta records refer to several tatakas and feeder-channels in the Karnataka territory. The Mahendra-tadaka excavated by Mahendravarman I (580-630 CE), the Paramesvara-tadaka in Kurram village, District Chingleput in Tamil Nadu dug by Paramesvaravarman I (672-700 CE), the Tenneri reservoir of Nandivarman's time, the Vairamega-tataka at Chitramerur, are noteworthy examples functioning even now. Among the rulers of the Deccan, the Kakatiyas, like the Cholas in the south, created a large and efficient network of irrigation tanks. Notable examples such as the Cavunda-samudra, Kesari-tataka, Sivapura-tadaka (Hanumakonda) and the Pakhal, Ghanpur and Ramappa lakes with high embankments and sluices are object lessons to modern engineers (Yazdani 1960). Artificial ponds adjoining temples for ceremonial bathing are a common feature, e.g. at Khajuraho, Sun temple, Modhera, Bhubaneswar and temple complexes in south India. The magnificent stepped wells in form of Rani ki Vav also appear on scene during Solanki period in Gujarat. A tank with steps known as Putali or Dhura Barao is also reported from Sindkhed Raja, district Buldhana of Maharashtra which is ascribed to the Yadava dynasty.

The Yadavas of Deogiri ruled the Deccan including Maharashtra, north Karnataka and Telangana from last quarter of the 9th century CE to the first quarter of the 14th century CE. The architectural manifestations of the Yadavas are contemporary with later Chalukyan movement in the South and the Solanki movement in the north which is well reflected in Yadava architecture. The elegance of its forms and richness in designs is witnessed at temples from Gondeshwar, Sinnar, Balsane, Amriteshwar, Lonar and Ambarnath.

Another distinct type of architecture of the Yadava period was construction of wells which are called *barav* in Marathi, *bawdi* or *baoli* in Hindi, and *vav* in Gujarati. These are wells or ponds in which the water can be reached by descending a set of steps. They are most common in the west India. They may also be found in the other arid regions of the subcontinent, extending into Pakistan. The construction may be utilitarian, but sometimes include significant architectural embellishments. All forms of the stepwell may be considered to be particular examples of the many types of storage and irrigation tanks that were developed in India, mainly to cope with seasonal fluctuations in water availability.

A basic difference between stepwells on the one hand, and tanks and wells on the other, was to make it easier for people to reach the ground water, and to maintain and manage the well. Builders dug deep trenches into the earth for dependable, year-round groundwater. They lined the walls of these trenches with blocks of stone, without mortar, and created stairs leading down to the water. The majority of surviving stepwells also served a leisure purpose, as well as providing water. This was because the base of the well provided relief from daytime heat, and more of such relief could be obtained if the well was covered. Stepwells also served as a place for social gatherings and religious ceremonies. This led to the building of some significant ornamental and architectural features, often associated with dwellings and in urban areas. It also ensured their survival as monuments. Stepwells usually consist of two parts - a vertical shaft from which water is drawn and the surrounding inclined subterranean passageways, chambers and steps which provide access to the well. The galleries and chambers surrounding these wells were often carved profusely with elaborate detail and became cool, quiet retreats during the hot summers.

The stepped tanks are either attached to temples or constructed independently under the Yadavas. The peculiarity of these wells is that they are provided with steps which ascend to the lowest depths. Along the side of the well rows of little niches containing images of deities are provided. Somewhat similar design was followed for the construction of tanks having square plan enclosed with a stone wall (Verma 1970: 301). Tanks from Lonar, Soneri Bamani, Amriteshwar both in district Ahemadnagar are finest specimens of this type. The Putali or Dhura Barao is often described as stepped well; it is actually a fine specimen of stepped tank architecture which is often referred as *'pushkarani'* in ancient Sanskrit literature.

Sindkhed Raja in Buldhana district is historicity famous especially as ancestral village of Jadhav family who provided foundations to the Nizamshahis of Ahmednagar. It is birth place of Chattrapati Shivaji's mother Rajamata Jijabai who belonged to this known Maratha family. The surface explorations in the village trace antiquity of Sindkhed Raja to early historical period. Though nothing of architectural importance has survived of Satavahana period except few brick structures, but the tradition narrates that Yadavas of Devgiri started populating the villages which were inhabited during the period of Satavahanas and Vakatakas. The presence of ornate water tank in form of Putali Barao provides conclusive evidence of the Yadava rule in this area around 12th century CE. A square sculptured tank must have served the inhabitants and performance of ritualistic holy water.

Sindkhed Raja is Tehsil headquarter situated about 91 km to north-east of Aurangabad. The buses from Aurangabad and Jalna to Nagpur via Mehkar pass from Sindkhed Raja on state highway number 183. The nearest railway station- Jalna is at the distance of 34 km and airport is Aurangabad, 90 km away from Sindkhed Raja. The Putali Barao (fig. 17) is located on the northern periphery of the village about 150 m away from the state highway number 183 in agricultural fields.

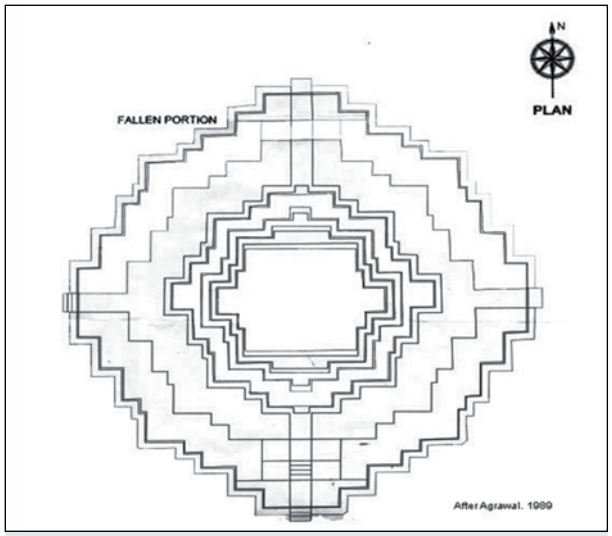

fig. 17 Plan of Putali (Dhura) Barao, Sindkhedraja: Buldhana, Maharashtra

The climate of Sindkhed Raja is generally hot and dry. The maximum temperature in summer is around 44^0 C and minimum temperature in winter is around 20^0 C. The average rainfall is about 800 mm. It lies on Balaghat plateau. The soil varies from light reddish loam on the fringes of hill side to black cotton soil in the valleys and depressions. The general slope of the landscape is from north to south. This falls on western margins of Vidarbha and on border Marathwada which is drought where droughts are frequent, rivers systems are inadequate, however, occurrence of natural ponds and dependency of human habitation on artificial irrigation is evident in archaeological record.

This profusely sculptured stepped tank is still intact and very well preserved and can be termed as the best example of art and architecture of medieval period in the history of Deccan. This square stepped well is now proposed for protection. Architecturally the well is built in a tiered manner and the upper three tiers one surviving only in eastern, southern and western sides while the northern side is damaged.

The stepped tank is a subterranean monument built in artificial dug pit in flat terrain. At present it is surrounded by agricultural fields. It is square on plan with off-sets and measures 23.50 m on the east-west (fig. 18). The major portion on the northern side is covered with mud deposit and no traces could be located on the surface about any

fig. 18 General view, Putali Barao, Sindkhedraja: Buldhana, Maharashtra

structure except a monolithic *linga* inserted in a circular *yonipitha* kept on a raised stone plinth which must have been enshrined in a chamber (fig. 19).

fig. 19 Shivalinga devoid of context: Putali Barao

It is built in tiered fashion and there are three major tiers or landings and the remaining are off-sets in receding order downwards. As there is stagnant water in the well, the off-sets inside the water could not be counted and measured (fig. 20). The water

fig. 20 A view from north: Putali Barao

in the tank is drawn by the owner for agricultural purpose. Some of the sculptures are applied with vermilion. However, no regular worship seems to be offered at this place.

As far as the sculptural wealth is concerned, the first tier is the only tier which is full of sculptures and architectural details. First tier represents sculptures and *devokasthas* (miniature shrine). Second tier represents mythical scenes in miniatures panels, whereas third tier represents the row of animal figures in different postures. Besides these, the steps of first tier leading to the second tier are also full of sculptural representations. In their outer faces, a variety of scenes, animate and inanimate, have been depicted. The panels of first tier individually measure 0.85 × 0.25 m. which house standing sculptures in different poses.

The *devokasthas* placed between standing sculptures row on the off-set junctions measure 1.25 × 1.25 m (fig. 21). Each *devokastha* has a crowning member or a *sikhara* in the form of a stone block depicting minutely carved a *makara-torana* under which are

fig. 21 Devokasthas: Putali Barao

shown ascetics in *padmasana* and standing; human figures (fig. 22). From the mouth of *makara,* human figures are coming out and are shown in different moods. The *torana* slab measures 0.75 × 1.00 m.

fig. 22 Torana: Putali Barao

The *devokastha* proper has also several architectural features. Each *devokastha* or niche has three *sakhas*. The outer most *sakha* is mostly plain except a few moulded designs. The middle *sakha* is moulded at the base depicting half-cut lozenges, a drummer, hanging bell in the mouth of *kirtimukhas*, ducks on one side and lozenges on the opposite *sakha*, a pillar design, round capital, square abacus and cross brackets. In some *sakhas* the order of depiction is different and more or less with little variation represent figure of Vishnu, minutely carved fluted portion, circular surface, *ghatapallava* motif, round capital, creepers, beaded bands, male and female *dvarapalas*. In the basal part of the niche a decorated *chandrasila, kirtimukhas* and lozenges are depicted in low relief. None of the *devokasthas* has the presiding deity in it, all are empty.

The sculpture row, the most important part of the edifice and tier no. 1 is the richest in representation. It represents women probably nymphs *(apsaras)* in vivid moods viz,

dancing, doing make-up, standing in amorous pose, playing with musical instruments, writing on the wall, playing with the bow and arrow, carrying the *kalasa* in a raised hand, holding the whisk, garland, hair dressing and standing (fig. 23).

fig. 23 Nayikas/ Apsaras: Putali Barao

Besides these, figures of ascetics, Lord Krishna playing the flute (fig. 24), Arjuna hitting in eye of rotating fish, human figures and dancing Ganesa (fig. 25) are important. All the figures are invariably shown under a *kritimukha* between decorated pilasters. The pilasters have moulded bases, cubical surface, arabesque trianguloid designs, lozenges, *ghatapallava* depictions and moulded surface.

fig. 24 Krishna with flute: Putali Barao

fig. 25 Ganesha: Putali Barao

The second tier is also full of narrations. In these small panels, fixed between the row of elephants and standing figures, various mythological scenes have been depicted. These panels have been made in different sizes but majority of them are in 0.35 × 0.22 m and 0.30 × 0.10 m. A panel measuring 0.35 × 0.22 m. is shown depicting Kesivadha, Krishna fighting with a demon horse. Here the sculpture is highly weathered and is very difficult to make out the facial expression. In another panel, mother Yasoda is shown churning butter, Bala Krishna killing the demon, mother Yasoda scolding Krishna and the lord lifting the Govardhana Mountain. This panel is also very much weathered and facial expressions are not clearly visible. In another long panel, Varahi seated on a

cushion and elephant trampling a human being, Lakshmi holding *shankh* and *padma*, again an elephant trampling a human being and running elephant, a fight between two people with knives, and Sita in Asoka *vatika* are some of the important friezes.

The third tier is exclusively covered by rows of elephants and lions. Each sculpture of the elephant has vigourous look and seems as though coming out of the wall. In a group of elephant and lion all the four figures are alive and show a rhythmic expression (fig. 26). In another corner elephants are shown as though carrying the entire load of the structure. Thus all the three parts of the upper tier of well provide a panorama of a beautifully sculptured stepped tank.

fig. 26 A close view of third tier: Putali Barao

Besides these the steps leading to the lower off-sets also depict various scenes. Each step measures 1.25 m long and 0.22 m wide. On the eastern steps, five scenes have been depicted (fig. 27). In the upper one, a battle scene is depicted. In the second step, a row of ducks carrying fishes

fig. 27 A close view of decorated steps: Putali Barao

in their beaks is depicted. The third one represents lozenges. On the fourth step, a war procession is shown. In both the panels, upper and lower, a movement is created. The galloping horse, the soldiers carrying the shield are indicative of that the whole procession moving forward for a decisive battle. The pair of ducks, holding a fish in their beaks is full of naturalism. Besides these, there are many loose sculptures lying in and around the well. In total 282 sculptures were counted, out of that - 15 semicircular *torana* pieces, 35 female figures, one Siva linga, one Nandi, one *yonipitha* and 41 small sculptural pieces depicting various scenes were found lying scattered.

Conclusions

The Putali Barav is a unique example of this kind in the state of Maharashtra. The Deccan has a long history of well and tank building. Most of these wells are classic examples of architecture but none of them are decorated with sculptures like Putali Barao. It is adorned with richly carved sculptures specially *Nayikas* in various postures. The architectural elements are also richly carved with decorative motifs and designs. The pushkarani or a stepped tank of Putali or Dhura Barao is only one of its kind and less intact example of the engineering skill and aesthetic eye of the Yadavas. The *devokasthas* and rich iconographic scheme of the monument indicate its high religious value along with usual purpose of storage of water in a drought zone. Thus, it remains a shining example of water management during the Yadava period with rich socio-economic, cultural and artistic values reflected in the archaeological record.

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Buddhist Motifs on Chinese Porcelain found in India

[1]Aprajita Sharma

Introduction

Two great civilisations in Asia, India and China, have had contacts since antiquity as evident by some of the ancient literary texts i.e. the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and the *Manusmriti* which have mentioned China as *Chin* (Ray 1995: 177-196). Geographical proximity could be one of the major factors of their prosperous contacts. But it was during 1st century CE when the trade and cultural interactions between India and China developed manifolds. As a result, in the light of the trade activities, Buddhism reached China from India. The Indian text, Kautilya's *Arthashastra* (Kangle 2000: 74) and the Chinese text of Wang Ta Yuan namely *Tao-i-Chih-lio* (1349 CE) speaks amply about the contacts from early periods between these two ancient nations.

Trade between India and China was carried out both via the Silk Road (the land route) as well as the Spice Route (the sea route). A number of trade items i.e. oil of roses, coral, cotton, pearls, amber, etc. were exported to China and in return goods like gold, camphor, coloured satin, silk, beads, musk and more significantly blue-and-white porcelain were imported (Sastri 1939: 297-298).

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Travelogues of Chinese and Arab travellers have proved that China and India had flourishing trade links and Chinese porcelain was regarded as a valuable export item. A Chinese traveller, Fa-Hien visited India in the 5th century CE and mentions strong ancient maritime trade links between coastal regions of India and China in his records (Legge 1965). Another famous Chinese traveller, Yuan Chwang, in his travelogue *Si-Yu-Ki,* mentions about strong cultural and trade contacts between the two countries during 7th century CE (Beal 2000). India-China trade was prolific to the extent that the Arab traveler Al-Biruni (973-1048 CE) mentions about it in his records (Lane 1947). He

also mentions about the export of Chinese ceramics, an item of great value, to India. Venetian traveller, Marco Polo, visited China in about 1290 CE, gives an interesting description about preparation of the raw material for porcelain. It was him who for the first time used the word 'Porcelain' for this distinctly looking white glossy ceramic. He has also mentions about the export of porcelain vessels and dishes (Carswell 2000: 18). Another noteworthy record comes from the writings of Ibn Battuta, an Arab traveller, who journeyed throughout Asia and reached China in about 1345 CE (Gibb 1929). In his record, he thoroughly describes the method used by Chinese potters for preparation of the clay and technique for manufacturing porcelain. Additionally, in his travel accounts, he mentions that porcelain was exported to India which can now be corroborated from a large number of porcelain finds in the country.

Growth of Buddhism in China

Trade contacts between India and China does not confine to export only; it opened fresh channels for cultural exchange as well. Ideas, philosophies, religions, commercial and technological interactions flourished through the traders, merchants, pilgrims, missionaries, soldiers, nomads and urban dwellers of Ancient India and China (Hogan 2007). A huge impact of India-China trade interaction was the introduction of Buddhism in China.

It was 61 CE, when the then Chinese emperor Ming Ti, having seen in a dream a golden figure floating in a halo of light across the pavilion, was told by his council that it must have been an apparition of Buddha, and sent a special mission of inquiry to India. The envoys returned to the China with two Indian monks, bringing with them *Pali* books and pictures of Buddhist figures and scenes. The Buddhist figures were copied on the Emperor Ming Ti's palace walls and on the new temple called *Pai Ma Ssŭ,* the White Horse Temple, in the memory of the horse which had carried the sacred relics across Asia (Bushell 1905: 23-24). Thus, it may be right to say that the Buddhism travelled to China from India and official introduction of Buddhism followed in the year 67 CE.

Following the foot-steps of Ming Ti, many other Chinese emperors continued to follow Buddhism and sent envoys to India to explore more about this religion. Buddhism was most active in China during the late Sui and early T'ang period. It was the time when the

main centre of Buddhism was shifted from its place of origin, India, to China. Buddhist monks from India travelled China, carrying Buddhist scriptures, images and pictures. They introduced Buddhist traditions and customs through the art which largely enjoyed a positive reception by the Chinese people resulting in, Chinese artisans sculpting Buddhist deities in bronze and stone, building *stupas*, temples, monasteries, etc. In addition to sculptures and temples, Chinese artisans painted a significant number of emblems, symbols and images of Buddhist deities on their most valuable export item, Chinese porcelain.

Chinese Porcelain and its Composition

Chinese porcelain is a distinct ceramic which is hard as jade and gave a melodious tone when strike. It is white in colour and has a glossy shine, like a *cowrie* shell. It was different from the other potteries available around the world which made it exclusive and increased its demand.

Porcelain was composed of two main ingredients kaolin (white non-plastic clay) and *pai-tun-tzŭ* (petuntse). Amongst the two, deposits of the kaolin are massive in China. The latter ingredient, white China stone, or petuntse, is a non-refined plastic felspathic material derived from decayed granite. These two materials were combined together to produce a vitrified body when fired at temperatures of about 1,280°C-1,400°C. After firing, the body of the pottery became impermeable, but since it doesn't look attractive at this stage therefore glazing was further done. For glazing, the Chinese potters used two types of glazes, i.e., those maturing at low temperatures and the ones maturing at higher temperatures (Medley 1976: 14-15).

As time progressed, Chinese potters mastered the art of porcelain making and made it unique by incorporating complex and distinctive decorative techniques and designs, from flora-fauna and landscapes patterns to religious deities and symbols, especially Buddhist motifs, making porcelain world famous. Such exceptional decorations on the porcelain raised its demand in overseas.

Buddhist Emblems on Chinese Porcelain

A variety of designs were found to be painted on Chinese porcelain, amongst which the most famous were the Buddhist deities, emblems and symbols. During the Sui period (581-618 CE), Buddhism had gained huge popularity in China. The Sui rulers tried to follow Buddhism along with the promotion of Confucian values. Construction of temples and monasteries were encouraged by the Sui rulers and the lotus flower of Buddhism became an important motif on all the artifacts including Chinese ceramics (Vainker 1991: 60). The tradition continued to be followed during T'ang period (618-906 CE) and the lotus design was either moulded or incised on Chinese celadon ware. The tradition of decorating Chinese porcelain with Buddhist emblems and motifs continued till the Ming period.

Amongst a number of Buddhist designs and motifs on Chinese porcelain, the commonly found are the eight Buddhist emblems or *pa chi-hsiang* (Savage 1954: 74-75). These are -

1) *Lun*, a flaming wheel of the law - the ever-turning wheel of transmigration of the soul which also symbolises the Buddhist teachings;
2) *Lo,* a conch shell - a wind instrument used at religious ceremonies which represents voice of Buddha's calling people to worship;
3) *San,* a state umbrella - a symbol of monarch which represents spiritual authority and shelter to all living beings;
4) *Kia,* a canopy - symbolises charity;
5) *Hua,* the lotus - the most frequent of all Buddhist symbols, an emblem of purity and enlightenment;
6) *Ping,* the vase - represents the water of life which means abundance and prosperity;
7) *Yu,* a pair of fishes - symbolises tenacity and connubial felicity;
8) *Ch'ang,* the endless knot - symbolises longevity and eternity, the knot also symbolises cyclical change of everything.

The Lions of Buddha *(Fo)*, are often represented in decoration and modelled as figures. Sometimes mistakenly, they are also referred to as *Kylin* or *Qilin* which is a different

mythical creature with the head of a dragon, a scaly body, deer's hooves, a bushy tail and a single horn. The Lion of Buddha is associated with Buddhism not only as a symbol of royal power but also as a guardian of the religion (Welch 2008: 244).

Till date, Chinese porcelain have been reported from 125 archaeological sites in India but there are very few sites from where Buddhist symbols and motifs on porcelain have been noticed. Such archaeological sites are - Firozshah Kotla Complex in Delhi, Golconda Fort in Hyderabad, Manalmedu in Tamil Nadu, Sekta in Manipur and St. Augustine's Church in Goa.

One of the biggest hoards of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain was discovered in India at Firozshah Kotla Complex. Amongst the seventy-two pieces of Chinese porcelain, found accidentally from Firozshah Kotla complex (Smart 1976: 199-231), three broken dishes of blue-and-white porcelain variety yielded some Buddhist emblems. The Buddhist emblems found on the inner centre of these dishes are conch shell and lotus (fig. 28 and 29). Rest of the marks represent precious jewels and Taoist emblems.

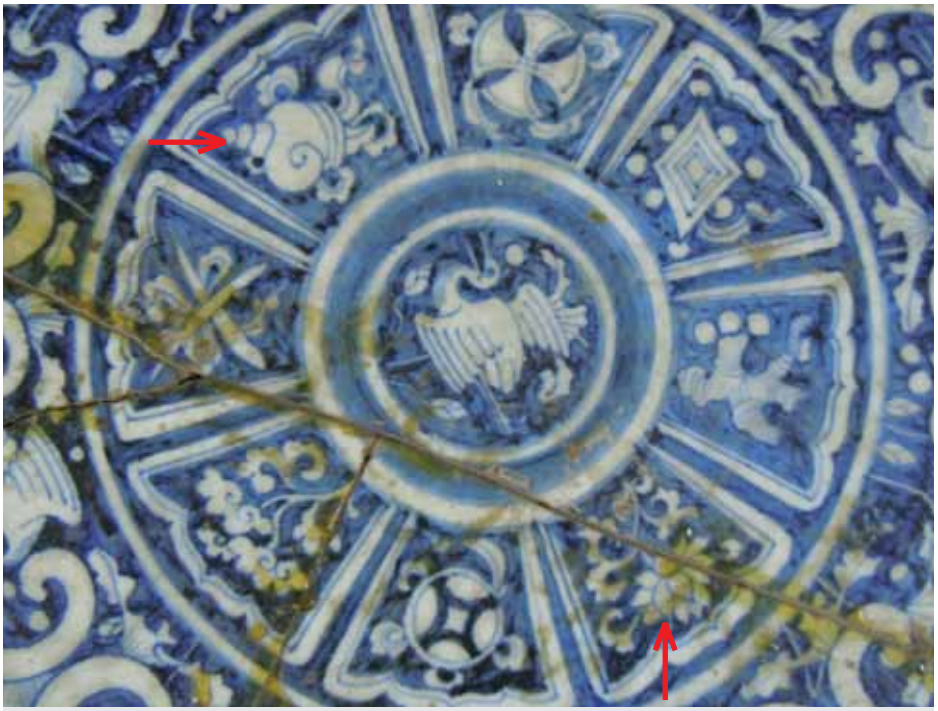

fig. 28 Conch shell and lotus: Firozshah Kotla Complex, Delhi

fig. 29 Conch shell: Firozshah Kotla Complex, Delhi (source: Archaeological Survey of India)

Another famous example is that of a large guan wine jar of blue-and-white porcelain variety which at present is displayed in British Museum, London. This piece was acquired from India although its exact site is unknown. It bears twenty auspicious emblems in lotus petal frames including Taoist and Buddhist emblems. Some motifs on this jar, such as flaming pearl lotus and twin fish, are identified with Buddhist emblems.

fig. 30 Conch shell with a flowing ribbon: Manalmedu, Tamil Nadu

Depiction of the conch shell on porcelain is very common. Generally it is depicted along with other Buddhist emblems in a circular pattern but sometimes alone as well. A blue and white porcelain potsherd found from Manalmedu, Tamil Nadu, has a stylised conch shell with a flowing ribbon (fig. 30). In Buddhism, it depicts pure and true teachings of the Buddha or sometimes referred to as the proclamations of the *dharma*.

During a discovery in Manipur, bowls of Chinese porcelain were recovered. Amongst the finds, two bowls of about 16th century CE have decoration of conch shell on the inner centre (fig. 31). This conch shell though looks very plain in style. Another similar example is from the excavated site of Sekta, Manipur. Three porcelain bowls datable to 16th century CE were found at Sekta during an excavation. Amongst these, one bowl

fig. 31 Conch shell on bowl: Manipur

has similar conch shell decoration on the inner centre of the bowl. Andro, another site in Manipur was excavated in 2003 by the Manipur State Archaeology Department and the Department of History, Manipur University which has also revealed a bowl of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain decorated with a conch shell (fig. 32).

fig. 32 Conch shell on bowl: Andro, Manipur

Lotus is another important Buddhist motif which is commonly found on Chinese porcelain. Sometimes it is decorated in a highly stylised manner with spiky petals as seen on a potsherd of porcelain from Firozshah Kotla Complex (fig. 33). It is the most liked Buddhist motif and frequently decorated both on celadon ware and blue-and-white porcelain. The depiction of lotus had appeared in decorations of bronzes before the Han dynasty, but it had never been an object of worship. This concept undoubtedly derives from Indian Buddhist art (Hung 1986: 10-11).

fig. fig. 33 Lotus with spiky petals: Firozshah Kotla Complex, Delhi

A celadon dish from Firozshah Kotla collection bears a lotus as a central design (fig. 34). A lotus pond in the centre of a porcelain dish or bowl is one of the common representations in blue-and-white porcelain (fig. 35) variety especially on the pieces of Yuan period.

fig. 34 Lotus in the centre of dish: Firozshah Kotla Complex, Delhi (source: Archaeological Survey of India)

fig. 35 Lotus pond: Firozshah Kotla Complex, Delhi

Besides the depiction of Buddhist emblems, there is one more important Buddhist motif which is noteworthy. The depiction of Lion of Buddha *(Fo)* as a central decoration on three dishes of blue-and-white porcelain from Firozshah Kotla Complex is considerably important. Amongst the three dishes, two are in fragile condition. On these two dishes, head portion of the Lions are entirely broken which suggests that these were intentionally mutilated by the orders of Firozshah Tughlaq. On the third dish, the depiction of Lion of Buddha is complete. It has a wavy tails and a head of a roaring lion. The Lion of Buddha is treated as a guardian of Buddhism and has been abundantly used on Chinese porcelain (fig. 36).

fig. 36 Lion of Buddha: Firozshah Kotla Complex, Delhi

Another site of Golconda Fort in Hyderabad revealed some intact Chinese porcelain pieces of the late 15th-16th century CE (*IAR* 1970-71, 1971-72, 1972-73, 1973-74, 1974-75). This collection includes bowls and dishes of blue-and-white porcelain and celadon ware. Amongst the dishes, one dish of Ming period (16th century CE) is decorated with the two roaring Lions of Buddha *(Fo)*. In decoration, they look slightly different in style as compared to Yuan period's Lion of Buddha. They have shorter legs and less stylised feet. Other than these symbols, depiction of Buddhist pagoda is also frequently found on porcelain especially on its blue-and-white porcelain variety. One such depiction of pagoda is traced on a dish found at Golconda Fort, Hyderabad. The depiction of pagoda although simple in style has also been noticed on a blue-and-white porcelain bowl found during the excavations at Purana Qila. This bowl is datable to Ming period and presently kept on display at the Archaeological Site Museum, Purana Qila in Delhi.

Conclusions

Not much in number though, but as mentioned earlier, some significant Buddhist motifs, emblems and designs have been noticed on porcelain in India. The chief religion of China was Taoism but Buddhism was equally popular in China. However, the idea of depicting the Buddhist emblems along with Taoist emblems on porcelain must have been borrowed from India. The best example for proving this resemblance is a round parasol on the head of a free-standing Bodhisattva image found from Mathura dated to 1st century CE which somewhat look like a big circular dish. This parasol is decorated with a fully blown lotus in the centre, a circular border comprising white geese and another wide border decorated with twelve symbols amongst which two emblems, i.e., twin fish and a conch shell are Buddhist emblems.

The point stands now that Buddhist motifs were largely painted on the blue-and-white porcelain during the Yuan period which was founded by Kubalai Khan, a Mongolian, in about 1260 CE. It is still a question that why Mongols didn't discourage such designs on porcelain. One possible reason could be that the Mongolian Khans of the Yuan dynasty patronised Lamaism, the Tibetan form of Buddhism, and that is why they appreciated such motifs (Bushell 1905: 46). Also, in order to control a large country like China, it was necessary for Mongols to support China's most loved religion i.e. Buddhism.

It is sometimes assumed that probably Mongols hardly understood the Buddhist emblems and its symbolisms and merely looked at them as simple designs. However, it is a less probable possibility as Mongols did know about the emblems and symbols but could not afford to lose a rich country like China by discouraging Buddhism. It was the Yuan period when the export of blue-and-white porcelain reached its peak and reached all over the world. Porcelain's trade was quite profitable and it soon became most precious item of export. One of the biggest reasons for porcelains' popularity was the continuous updation of its style, decoration and designs according to demand. Keeping in view the specific demands of Mongols, Chinese potters made large dishes, bowls, ewers, etc. but for decorating it, they somehow managed to fit Taoist and Buddhist designs along with the Mongolian motifs. This way, Chinese succeed in conserving their culture, art and ideas along with welcoming the influences from Near East, India and Central Asia.

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Museums

New Initiatives and Opportunities at the Archaeological Museum and Venkatappa Art Gallery in Bangalore

[1]Sarayu Narasimhan

"Real museums are places where Time is transformed into Space."
- Orhan Pamuk (Turkish novelist and screenwriter)

Museum experiences can be greatly enhanced through thorough textual interpretation. While interpretation of the collection is necessary, explanatory information about the history and significance of the grounds and the architecture of building enriches the museum's role. The Government Archaeological Museum and the adjoining Venkatappa Art Gallery (GMVAG) in Bangalore together form an excellent case study, providing opportunities for interpretation by examining their collections, interiors, and their shared grounds. The fact that the museum is housed in a heritage building on large public grounds provides potential for interpretation of the interior and exterior. Two months ago, the author read an article in the *Deccan Herald* that spoke about the government's initiative to restore and renovate both the exterior and interior of the GMVAG. These planned enhancements were done to significantly improve the interior and exterior of the structure. This initiative is also an opportunity to consider ways the institution can integrate textual interpretation in and around the museum.

Maintenance of the vicinity grounds and landscaping are often overlooked by museums. Improving the grounds is an initiative that not only enhances but also increases the scope and mission of the institution. According to the author, a visitor experiences the natural and cultural heritage of a place not only through interaction with the relics, but also through factors such as the building and the grounds. This point is reiterated by American librarian and museum director John Cotton Dana: "Surely a function of a public art museum is the making of life more interesting, joyful and wholesome" (Dana 1917: 22) Interpretation of the building, the grounds, and the exhibits helped GMVAG achieve precisely what Dana suggests. The grounds have great potential to be a natural heritage park and sculpture garden, with explanatory display panels and signboards.

The museum building is built in the Colonial era, providing an opportunity for attractive, durable outdoor signage that interprets the structure in its historical and architectural realms. The article which author read in the *Deccan Herald* speaks about cleaning the pond in the grounds, reconstructing the compound wall, leveling the garden, fixing roof leaks, and exhibiting more art and artifacts. These well-planned initiatives not only broaden the scope of the institution but also attract a large audience, even allowing this rather overlooked museum to become a pivotal and visible destination for visitors worldwide. As the government and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) begin the process of renovation and restoration, many opportunities to increase public interest in this museum comes to author's mind.

The first consideration is the area surrounding the building, the initial interaction with the museum. The 55,000 square foot plot presently contains ample foliage and park-like settings. Although some areas are not landscaped, others have been. Potential for park and garden development could be increased throughout the grounds. Signage as a means for interpretation of natural heritage such as horticulture could be a valuable component of the museum's mission for promoting education and understanding. In effect, the garden and grounds have the potential for expanding the museum space into the exterior area.

The museum has landscaping that is not congruent with the architecture. The building and museum could be greatly complemented by a British style of garden that would enhance the colonial building, thereby connecting the landscape with the architectural style. Being one of the oldest and best-preserved examples of colonial architecture in Karnataka, the landscape has its own history that contributes to the museum through its potential to enhance education and interpretation. This broadening to the institution's mission will allow this stately building to attract the public.

The building is situated in the centre and it has a distinct style that is specific to the neoclassical style of architecture. A reaction against the Rococo and Baroque movements, this style emphasised clean lines, plain fluted columns, blank walls, an uncluttered appearance, and large-scale buildings. By means of text panels and signboards, the public will have access to information about the museum building's unique architectural style. Although, it is primarily a neoclassical building, it also has vernacular elements.

It is a unique blend of European styles and regional tastes and materials. It also bears interesting motifs on its façade such as human faces (fig. 37). All these unique traits should be documented and presented to the public through attractive and durable signage.

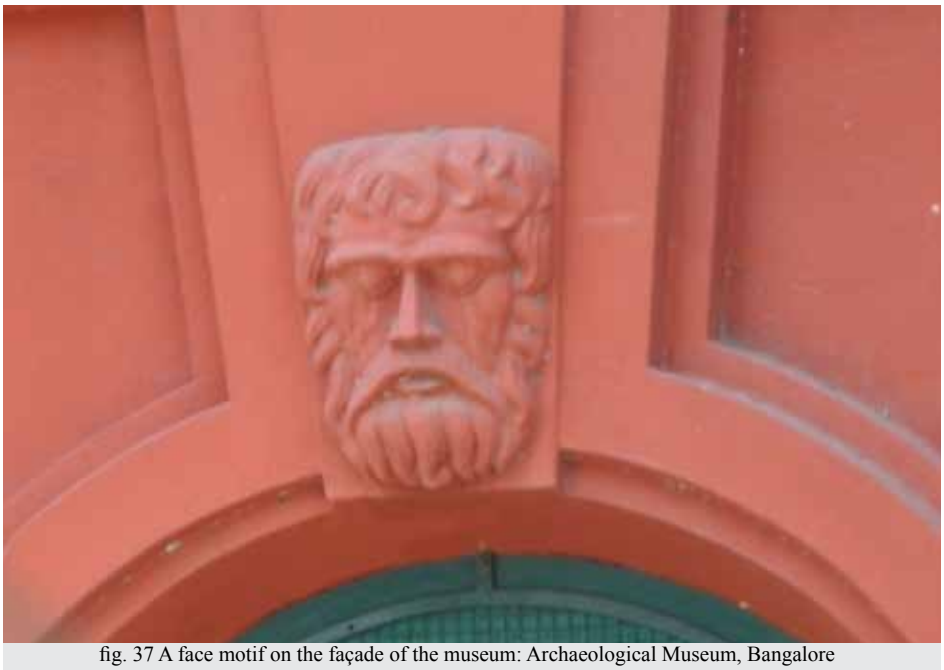

fig. 37 A face motif on the façade of the museum: Archaeological Museum, Bangalore

In addition to housing historical artifacts, the building and its grounds are in itself objects of history. This noteworthy point is not given any importance, probably because the building slowly lost its novelty when modern architectural styles became dominant in the city, resulting in an unfortunate lack of appreciation for heritage architecture. In addition to this, it is likely that it is a victim of the popular trend of abstaining from the old and embracing the new and potentially inferior. The author researched this heritage structure and discovered that it was in fact, built specifically for the purpose of housing the artifacts: this has given it a heritage of its own.

The green and white trims, the architectural details, such as the doors and windows as well as the terracotta walls, are common to other buildings around this locality, such as the High Court of Karnataka and the State Central Library situated in Cubbon Park. These shared characteristics are factors that could be promoted at the GMVAG, thereby highlighting the colonial history of the area. Textual interpretation could aid in ascribing a context to and disseminating information about the similar civic spaces surrounding the museum.

Although the building might not conform to some of today's museum standards (for example, lack of climate control, a circumstance that can imperil works on paper), there are several design features that are noteworthy. For example, the indigenous granite provides an excellent opportunity to showcase native craftsmanship (fig. 38). Natural light is very appropriately used to highlight the texture and carvings on the stone sculptures that are interesting examples of ancient originally intended for outdoor contexts. An outdoor environment has been chosen to situate the café and the benches so that interaction is encouraged. Such considerations could appropriately develop the building into a significant museum, and, as mentioned earlier, the fact that it is a heritage building adds to the experience of viewing historical artifacts. However, to further enhance the museum experience, well-researched textual panels about notable features of the building's interiors could be provided.

fig. 38 Indigenous materials like granite used as flooring in the museum: Archaeological Museum, Bangalore

To conclude, author revisits the purpose of a museum by quoting an eminent Ceylonese art historian and philosopher Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "If we ask, why should the protected works of art be exhibited and made accessible and explained to the public, the answer will be made, that this is to be done with an educational purpose"

(Coomaraswamy 2004: 111). GMVAG can expand its 'educational purpose' through certain aspects of the museum that may have been overlooked, specifically the grounds and the building. The ASI and the State Government are instrumental in rectifying many aspects of the museum, while increasing its potential. This expanded focus upon natural and cultural heritage broadens the institution's scope, while promoting education through careful interpretation and dissemination of knowledge.

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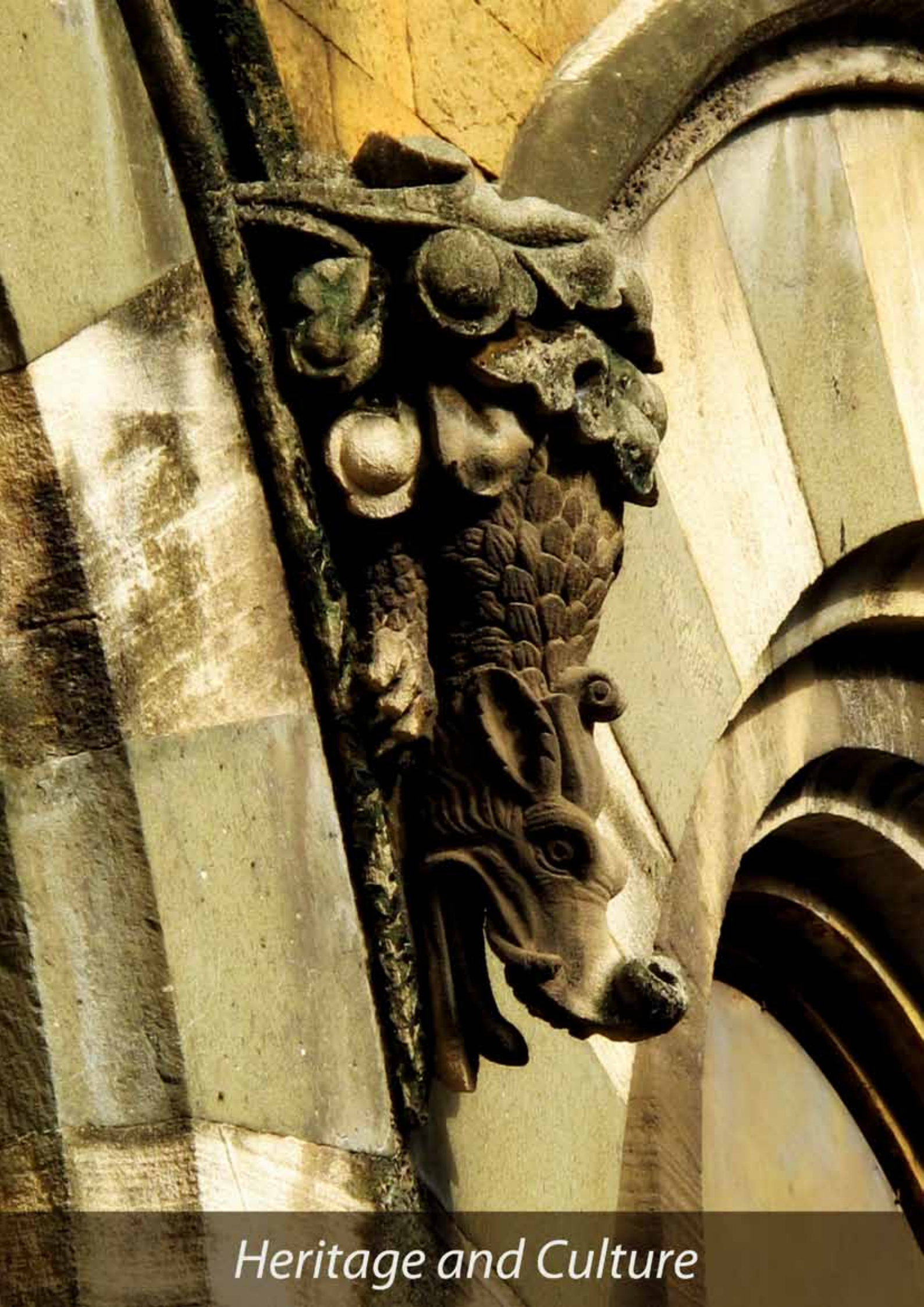

Heritage and Culture

Tombs of the Dead and Cult of the Living: Megalithic Traditions in Kuthannur Region, Kerala

[1]R. Saravanan

The area of the present study is the Kuthannur region, situated 30 km south-west of Palghat. Kuthannur is a Panchayat which comes in the Alathur taluk of District Palghat. The Kuthannur village is located on the south-west part of the Palghat district of Kerala which covers an area of 35.83 sq. km. Kuthannur is a panchayat which was formed in 1953-54. The name Kuthannur is composed of 'Koothan' and 'Ur' which means place of Kooth. The word 'Koothan' means dancer or actor and thereby 'Kuthannur' means the place of dancer and actor. The region is relatively rural with a low level of urbanisation and barring a few people, most others are engaged in traditional forms of livelihood. The important neighbouring villages of Kuthannur region are Peringottukurissi in the north, Mathur and Kuzhalmannam in the east, Eramayur in the south, followed by Mathur and Peringottukurissi in the west. Some of the other small towns around Kuthannur are Tholannur, Kuzhalmannam and Kazhani.

The area under the present study is the locality called Muppuzha. Literally, Muppuzha means three rivers which have disappeared now. Muppuzha is about 2.5 km away from the Kavalappara, local town of Kuthannur. This is rural area settled by small scale agricultural labourers and other menial labourers. Alathur is the nearest town of this village which is 15 km away from the township of Kuthannur.

Dolmens are the main monuments in this region which is partly ruined due to natural factors and human intervention. Among them, port-holes are clearly visible. Besides these, two caves are located on the same rock, situated 1.5 km away from this site. In Kuthannur, the ritual practices of the people are not much affected by modern urban culture. Though the people do not follow megalithism in its sepulchral form anymore but they are not completely alienated from the monuments. The local people claim that these monuments were built by their ancestors (Kutty 2006: 8-10). Instead, they consider it to be their cultural property and even pay homage to them by conducting *pooja* [ritual

ceremony]. This feeling of cultural affinity is a factor of considerable interest and this is the factor that has motivated the author to take up the present study.

Legends

The people of Kuthannur do not cherish much legendary tales associated either with their past or with the origin of the megaliths of the area but there are some stories related to the caves which are known as Nariyalavangu. The people around the caves believed that a sorcerer named Poondiyil Samiyar used to live here long ago. He was very popular among the local people and is presently celebrated as Sree Sankaracharyar because he was believed to have possessed some magical powers. His house was in Padijnare Thara near Kuthannur village, but he spent most of his life in the Nariyalavangu.

There is another legend about this cave. Taking note of some foot prints found near this cave, people believe that they were laid by Sree Hanuman who had come down here to collect some medicinal plants to treat his brother Indrajeet wounded in the war. In the mythological epic, the monkey-warrior Hanuman was sent to fetch the medicinal herbs from the Himalaya in order to heal Lakshmana who was wounded trying to save the abducted Princess Sita from the demon king Ravana. Hanuman failed to identify these herbs, so he lifted the entire mountain and carried it to the battlefield.

The People of Kuthannur

Ezhavas, Muslims, Christians, Cherumans and other Scheduled Caste groups are the important communities of Kuthannur. Majority of the people are Ezhavas and Cherumans, who are not much different in terms of culture and traditions. But in ritual terms, clear signs of hierarchy prevail among them. The Ezhavas do not receive food from the latter during occasions of ritual ceremonies and other functions. The migrant communities of Muslims and Christians are minorities in this region.

The Kanakka Cherumans have a close association with megalithic monuments of this area. Their main occupation is farming, agricultural labourers and toddy-tappers. Although they were socially and economically under-privileged in the past, their status is now considerably better. The Kanakka Cherumans forms an inferior community of agricultural labourers in Malabar. According to Madras census report of 1881, agricultural

classes are known as Cherumans in south Malabar, Kanakkans in north Malabar, and Pulayas in south Kerala. Among the Cherummans, there is also sub-division called Pula Cheruman. In Palghat district, certain other communities which are engaged in similar professions are the Kanakkans, Eravalans, Kadar and Kalam. While the Kadarsare also found in the Waynad district, Eravalans are seen in Palghat alone.

Cherumans denote the sons to the soil. They are said to be divided into 39 divisions and some of them are endogamous groups. They were occupied as agricultural labourers by the land lords for such work as ploughing, sowing seeds and reaping the harvest. One observation is that Cherumakkal is the compound of Cheru + Makkal, meaning of the first term in malayalam being 'wet soil or mud' and makkal means childrens. Their attachment to the soil as is denoted by their name may point to the fact that they were one of the most ancient indigenous populations of the land. In appearance, many are physically inferior to the Parayans. The men are small, short in stature and their complexion not simply dark but at times black. The women were quite diminutive.

In the past, they were agricultural slaves attached to the soil and exchanged with land from owner to owner by sale mortgage, etc. of the land. Their work lay almost exclusively in the rice fields pumping them day by day by means of water wheels, making up embankments, ploughing, weeding, transplanting and reaping. Men, women and children are worked together during the harvest time. In the night time they had to also guard their master's fields from the cattle or the depredations of wild animals.

Like Parayans, Cherumans generally call their houses as Chala. Chala was made up of a thatched roof mostly of grass and palms leaves. But now days, they have started constructing modern type houses. The senior most member of the family is known as Karanavar. It is believed that he has some special powers especially associated during the marriage, death ceremonies, etc.

Cult of the Living: Death Ceremonies among the Inhabitants

The Megaliths reflect many different kinds of funerary practices - extended, fractional, post-excarnation and post-cremation burials (Singh 2008: 242-243). The funeral ceremonies of the Hindu populations of this district are similar to those observed by the Hindus in other parts of the state. Cremation is usually observed by the high caste

Hindus. In Palghat, Chittur-Thattamangalam and Mannarghat-Pattambi, there are common burial grounds. Cremation is regarded as a costly affair and the low caste Hindus who cannot afford to it, generally follows the burial system.

Their funeral ceremonies are very significant and show certain traits of primitive practices. The dead body is laid on a mat and materials such as rice, a burning lamp and incense stick are placed at the head. The body is bathed before the burial. After the ceremonial washing of the dead body, 'Bhasma' or sacred ash or sandal paste is put over the forehead and certain other parts of the dead body and cover the corpse with a piece of white cloth and then a red cloth. They throw rice into the graves before the lowering the dead body. Cherumans do not practice cremation. In the burial ground, there is a singer familiarly known as 'Kakkadi'. The chief mourner is the eldest son. The mourners of the house fast on the day of death. They take bath only on the next day after the burial. They partake 'Kanjee' (water with boiled rice) offered to the spirit of the death. The remains of the deceased are collected after 7 or 14 days and immersed into the pool, river or seas. Pollution is observed generally for 14 days which terminate by a feast held. Usually, this feast held twice on 7th or 13th or 14th or 16th days after the burial which is dependent on the basis of the economic status of the family. 'Pella' (pollution) is the typical term used by them for 14 days.

The 7th day of death is a day of ritual importance and there will be some special rites which is known as 'Ezhu'. Followed by Ezhu, there are a few more ritual functions. Throughout Kerala, these functions are known by different names such as Sanchayanum, Avasaram and Adiyantharam generally performed on the 13th or 16th day of the death. Among these, another ceremony namely'Andumeedal' is still prevalent. In this function,different offeringsare given to the dead person according to his/ her lifestyle and food habits, when he/ she was alive. After the pooja, food is distributed and other items that were offered to the dead person. People consider these offerings as 'Prasadam'. It signifies the cessation of ritual pollution and the purification of the body and mind of the relatives who have participated in these functions.

In addition, they offer annual offerings to the ancestors the rite of which is called 'Sradham'. Offerings of the spirits include cooked rice with chicken curry, toddy and most items the dead person liked when alive. The deceased ancestors are looked upon as beneficiaries

of the 'Tharavadu' and they are worshiped with due rites. Another ceremony connected after with the dead body is 'Baliyidal' or giving rice bowl to crows. All members of the family observe death pollution irrespective of caste. The observance of 'Sradham' or death anniversary of one ancestors and offering of 'Vavu-Bali' on new moon days, particularly in Karkkidakam (July-August) which is the last month of Malayalam and also known as 'Pajna masam' (people do not work in this month due to the rainy season). 'Sradham' is the important ceremonies connected with the ancestor worship. This cultural tradition of worshipping hero's through sprits is extensively prevalent in South India, as parts and parcel of Sangam heritage (Rajan 1982: 71).

In Kerala, the Scheduled Castes and the tribal communities worship their ancestors, generally on the occasion of Deepavali Vavu (Moon Day) in the month of October and Karkkidaka Vavu (Moon Day) in the month of July. Kanakka Cherumans of Kuthannur are not different from them. They conduct pooja on the occasion of Vavu's for propitiating ancestors. Each and every ancestor is remembered on the day of the 'Vav' (black moon) through the 'Samooha Pooja' (social offerings) and 'Kudumba Pooja' (family offerings). In Samooha Pooja, they memorised all their ancestors (fig. 39). Usually, it is practised in the month of Karkkidakam. In 'Kudumba Pooja', family members worship their kin-ancestors. They believe that if the ancestors are not sufficiently propitiated, they will cause harm to them and the rituals

fig. 39 Food offerings to the ancestors by Kanakkancheruman: Muppuzha/ Kuthannur/ Palakkad, Kerala
(source: Sajeev. R, 2009)

are meant for keeping them contented (Kutty 2006: 10). In such ritual occasions, the participation of all the family members is compulsory.

As regards the burial, the relations perform certain rites on the 7th or 14th day, which are similar to the sanchayanam ceremony (annual ceremony). Over the burial they place small stones to demarcate the spot and lamps are lit in the night. Performance of bali and other rituals is observed in burial system (Kemare 1976: 49-54).

Tombs of the Dead: Affiliations of the Megalithic Survivals

The Kanakka Cherumans of Kuthannur, who are probably the earliest inhabitants of this area, appears to have been the descendants of the megalithic builders. They are neither afraid of nor are contemptuous of the monuments. Moreover, they consider this site as sacred, and worship some of the monuments. The traces of megalithic burial builders, the worship of ancestors as deities and the emotional attachment of the monumental area would probably point to the fact that these monuments were created by their ancestors. They may be original builders of these funeral tombs. The long process of acculturation and sanskritisation has happened due to the changes in customs, ritual practices and other religious function. This process might have greatly alienated them from their tradition which would have been a major factor responsible for the absence of direct traces of megalithic practices in their life.

Monuments of the Retrospective Analysis in Kuthannur Region

In 2001, Kuthannur region was explored by Archaeological Survey of India for the first time and a report of the monuments was prepared. A seminar on the historical importance of Kuthannur was conducted in 2003 jointly by the Kuthannur Panchayat and National Literacy Mission which was attended by Dr Raghava Varier and Dr Sasi Bhushan. The seminar evaluated that monuments of Kuthannur are almost 2500 years old. No further studies were undertaken on the historical importance of this significant archaeological site. Three distinct types of monuments were found out in Kuthannur and adjacent region. They consist of a group of thirty-seven Dolmens, twelve Menhirs and three Stone Circles. Some of these monuments have perished due to human depredations.

Some dolmens are found here. One is fairly larger than all others. Some portion of it lay under the soil. It must have been due to later sedimentation. The stone slabs which are used to cover the stone chamber have been severely damaged (fig. 40). Of all others, three dolmens have port-hole; it is likely that these were constructed for important people. There is one another large dolmen, clearly visible and is almost intact. The remaining dolmens are in ruins. The heaps of stone or stone alignments are scattered in these area. They may have been graves of the ordinary people or the relics of secondary burials.

fig. 40 Dolmen: Muppuzha/ Kuthannur/ Palakkad, Kerala (source: Sajeev. R, 2009)

Most of the monuments are in a state of ruin and some of them have almost disappeared. The idols of god named Nisal are placed beneath a Neem tree and a Pana tree near the monuments is being worshipped by the local people. Whenever, the people are affected by some disease in the area, people perform ceremonial offerings to these gods.

Measurements and Orientations of the existing megalithic monuments located in Kuthannur are given below in Table 1.

Sl. No.	Length (in cm)	Width (in cm)	Height (in cm)	Slab Thickness (in cm)	Colour	Orientation	Port-hole (in cm)
1	240	250	70	18	Light gray	11°N-E	- -
2	150	315	30	15	Light gray	139°S-E	- -
3	625	200	59	12	Light gray	290°N-W	- -
4	180	220	200	10	Dark gray	251°S-W	44
5	150	130	125	15	Dark gray	78°N-E	- -
6	280	200	190	38	Reddish	220°S-W	50
7	175	230	150	10	Dark gray	18°N-E	- -
8	130	125	77	18	Light gray	90°E	- -
9	250	270	30	18	Dark gray	45°N-E	- -
10	25	157	15	8	Light gray	279°N-W	- -

In the burial ground, there are numerous monuments. Among them, one port-holed dolmen is relatively undamaged and is bigger than the other megaliths (fig.41). A tree has grown from inside due to a crack in the orthastat. As per the evidence, the people of Kuthannur region constructed monuments on the basis of ranking i.e. those who have high position in the society. This dolmen is somewhat far away from other monuments. Rest of the other two dolmens are in fragile condition. One dolmen has a port-hole in it, unlike the other. Since, orthostats of the other monuments are broken, we cannot identify whether port-holes were there or not on the

fig. 41 Dolmen with port-hole: Muppuzha/Kuthannur/ Palakkad, Kerala (source: Sajeev. R, 2009)

remaining monuments. These monuments were not just part of a religious endeavour or a device for disposing the dead. They are symbols and emblems of group identity of the social groups who constructed those monuments to establish their identity. Cupule marks also found on the top of the dolmen (fig. 42). These tombs lay in the confines of those groups who through the construction of these monuments keep the use and control of the land. The port-hole usually measures from 0.45 to 0.55 cm in diameter and is approached by short passage of low height. Generally, the port-hole is

fig. 42 Cupule marks: Muppuzha/ Kuthannur/ Palakkad, Kerala (source: Sajeev. R, 2009)

either circular or semicircular and is on the edge or at the bottom of the orthostat which is either on the southern or eastern orthostat. The port-hole is not a universal feature with all the dolmens.

The hole was evidently designed for the insertion of bones and offerings (Wheeler 1959:151). A dolmen is usually enclosed within a stone circle and has sometimes a bench inside it. This type is also found in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere in the southern

Peninsula (Ghosh 1989:130-131). The port-hole cists are found at Porkalam in Trichur which is one of the most important megalithic sites in Kerala. The port-hole cists here are allied to another one discovered at Thiruvillamala in Palghat. The location of this site is few kilometres away from the burial site in Kuthannur which has yielded Red ware, decorated with yellow wavy lines (Menon 1967: 54).

Orientation must have had a definite connotation to the direction of the passage which in turn affects the design of the inferior and the orientation probably had an astronomical basis. The location of the megalithic tombs has interrelationship with the landscape, environment, their functions, underlying funeral practices and beliefs.

One can also see caves at Kavalappara in the village of Kuthannur, a place which is popularly known as Nariyalavangu (fig. 43). Nariyallavangu has situated 2 km far from the burial sites of Kuthannur. Nariyalavangu means that tiger which subsist on the cave [Nari-tiger or other wild animals and Vangu-cave or large hole]. The area is covered with forest and wild animals are found here.

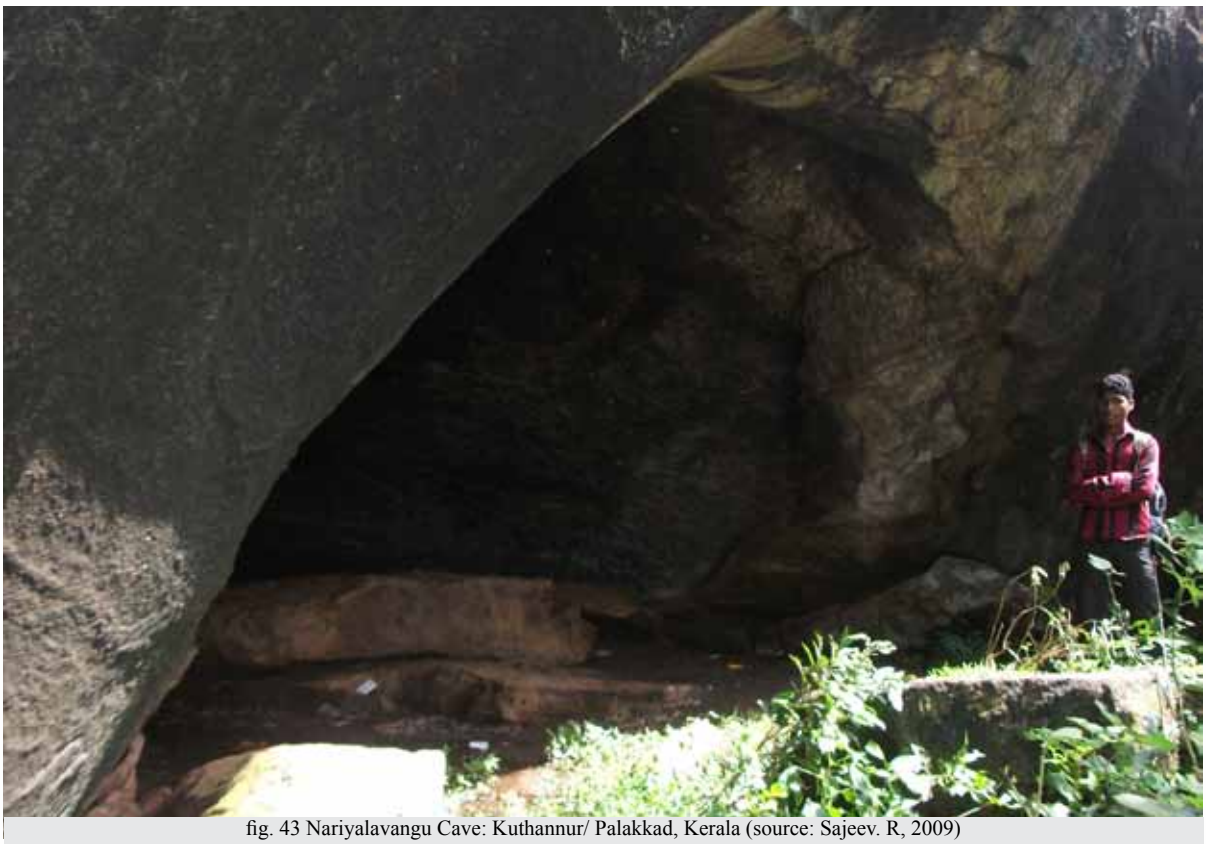

fig. 43 Nariyalavangu Cave: Kuthannur/ Palakkad, Kerala (source: Sajeev. R, 2009)

There is port-hole on the roof or upper portion of the cave. The facade of this cave facing westward is almost like the Edakkal cave, one of the crests of a hill known as Ambukuthi Mala, belonging to the Western Ghats and situated about 10 km south west of Wayanad. It has a height of about 6.5 m and a width of 5 m. There is a stone bench made out of granite rock inside this cave. Two lamp-like pits dug into the stone surface placed near a wall of the cave. This must have been for some kind of ritual function.

There are two pits on the rocky surface of the front floor of this cave. The pits may be used for grinding food stuff because these look like pounding stone (fig. 44). A lady is reported to have got an Attukuzha from here. There are eight small pits in a single row and two small stairs leading to two pits of the eight other ones. It is likely that these caves also belong to the megalithic period.

fig. 44 Pounding stone: Nariyalavangu/ Kuthannur/ Palakkad, Kerala (source: Sajeev. R, 2009)

Caves of similar variety are absolutely absent in other parts of India. A few of them are reported to have been found in Palestine. These varieties of caves were constructed during the Iron Age(Varrier and Gurukkal 1994:92-93). On the opposite direction, there is an *Ayyappan Kavu* (Ayyappa is the divine deity of Sabarimala temple in Kerala) at the foot hills. These would have no association with the megalithic builders and it may be of recent origin.

Discussions

Since data collection through excavation is not possible because the prevailing rules and regulations do not permit such exercise. A conclusive study on the structure and content of the megalithic relics of the site could not be undertaken. Hence, the study is based on the evidence collected through a surface survey of the site and photography and interviews with the local people. Without excavation, no details of the grave goods are available to make comparison with the present day practices and with the material from proximate and distant regions.

Though there are numerous megalithic monuments in the Kuthannur region, they have not been subjected to an in-depth study by Archaeologists and Historians. Only one seminar which was organised on this subject by the Kuthannur Grama Panchayat and National Literary Mission in 2003 but further steps have not been taken to study these monuments. The present study attempts to bring the Kuthannur region into the limelight of history. It would be interesting to make an inquiry into the survival of megalithism in the Kuthannur region. Though the practices of the construction of the megalithic monuments do not exist here, today, the tradition of megalithism appears to have survived in this region in various forms including the continuity of ancestor worship and funeral procession.

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Moorish Mosque: Architectural Elegance of Kapurthala (Punjab)

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A spectacular example of the secular history of Kapurthala is the Moorish Mosque, a famous replica of the Grand Mosque of Marakesh, Morocco, which was built by a French architect, Monsieur M Manteaux. Its construction was commissioned by the last ruler of Kapurthala, Maharaja Jagatjit Singh and took almost 13 years to complete between 1917 and 1930. It was then consecrated in the presence of the late Nawab of Bhawalpur. The mosque's inner dome contains decorations by the artists of the Mayo School of Art, Lahore. It is a monument of national importance, protected by the Archeological Survey of India. It was one of the monumental creations in the state during the premiership of late Diwan Sir Abdul Hamid Kt., CIE, OBE. Its wooden model lay at the entrance of the Lahore Museum.

fig. 45 Front view: Moorish Mosque

fig. 46 Central courtyard: Moorish Mosque (source: livekapurthala.com)

fig. 47 Inner view of the dome: Moorish Mosque
(source: Department of Cultural Affairs, Archaeology and Museums, Punjab)

fig. 48 Arched gallery: Moorish Mosque
(source: bcmtouring.com/north india travelogues/kapurthala)

Moorish architecture is a variation of Islamic architecture. There are many motifs, or repeated patterns, in Moorish architecture. Moorish architecture is named after the Moors, North African people who conquered the Iberian Peninsula and many islands in the Western Mediterranean beginning in the 700 CE. The Moors, for hundreds of years, used to control the present-day Spain, Portugal, and the Pyrenees region of France. The “Moors” were Muslims and influenced by the Islamic architecture that developed in the Middle East.

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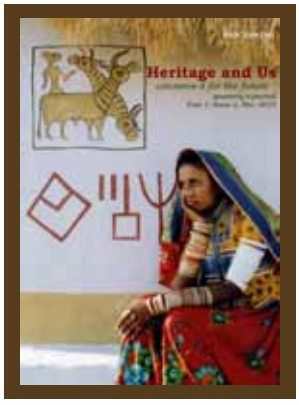

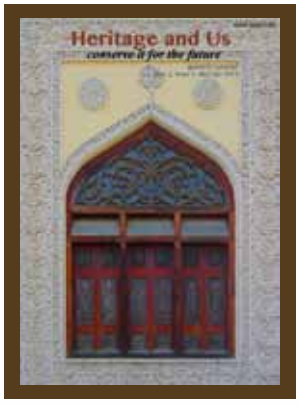

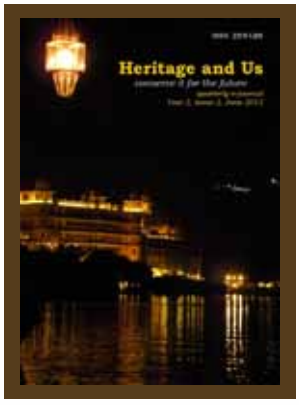

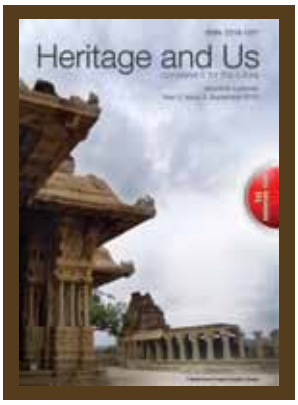

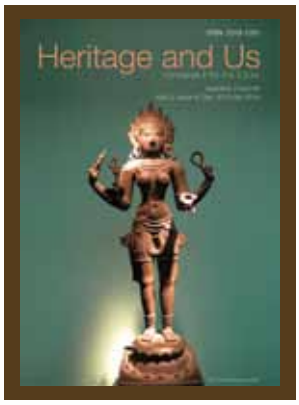

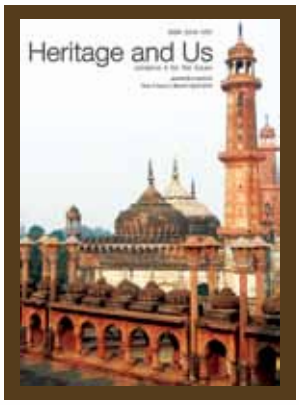

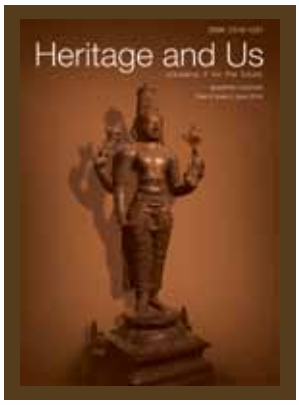

73

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