Chapter VII

CRITICAL STUDY OF BUDDHIST ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The study of the various monuments and sculptures of Buddhism in Karnataka has given an interesting information. The monuments are usually similar to the other region like viharas, Chaityas and the sculptures like, memorial stones, Buddha, Avalokiteshwara, Tarabhangavati, Yaksha, Naga and decorative panels as well as Jataka stories etc.

The artistic and the architectural features have been known from the earlier studies. An attempt has been made here to study them critically, each item of architecture of Karnataka.

Viharas:

In the study of the Buddhist viharas, so far found in various parts of Karnataka either in the epigraphical reference or structural remains are appeared right from 2nd century AD to localities of then the are Benagutti, Banavasi, Rajaghatta, Dambal, Balligavi and Chikkindi.

The field study does not show any indication of the Vihara of the satavahana period but a vihara built during the period of chutus is the earliest, reference, and in the locality of Balligavi and Chikkindi and Dambal are the places, of the Medieval period that is 12th century A.D.
The Vihara remains of Benaguttī (1) located near sannati is consists of eight cells (18.80 x 75.25mt)

The size of the bricks and the technology adopted for the preparation of the foundation bed by lying the pebbles are comparatively, similar to that of Vadagao- Madhavpur of the satavahana period 2nd to 3rd century A.D.

There were viharas with cells as well as a large hall appeared in some rock cut caves of the same period in Western Maharashtra. However, similar structural remains of the satavahana period were hardly noticed in Karnataka.

**Banavasi Vihara :**

A vihara constructed during the period of vinukuda chutukulananda of about 3rd century A.D. as per the record at Banavasi has not yet traced its structural remains. However, there were viharas slightly earlier or later in Karnataka.2

**Balligave :**

The epigraphs of 1064 AD3 refers to the construction of Vihara at Balligave as well as installation of Buddhist deity Tarabhagavati.

In the vicinity of vihara complex at the place were yoginis, kusulis and samastha families. However, the structural remains of the natha cult were located very close to these remains, whether there was any connection between the Buddhist remains and the remains of the Natha cult are required to be studied.
Rajaghatta:
The vihara of Rajaghatta has the features like chaitya with a prakara varandah, six cells, walls, bathrooms and the remains as well as large number of terracotta votive stupas of the floor etc. It is made out of bricks. It may be dated to circa 4th to 5th century AD. The contemporary structural vihara in Karnataka are hardly appeared. However, there is a chaityalaya at Aihole of about 6th to 7th century AD.

Haralakunte:
According to records there was a vihara at Haralakunte. The structural details are hardly brought to light. The certain remains of the adhishthana etc. of the place noticed by sasalu - Vishwanath may be the remains of the vihara that it needs through excavation to show other details of the site.

Kadri Vihara:
An inscription of 968 AD refers to the construction of vihara, which is written on the pedestal of Lokesvara image at kadri. The structural remains of the vihara of the place was not yet found.

An Ayaka pillar erected on the left hand outside the manjunath temple is an isolated one.

The occurrence of bronze Buddhist images at the place indicates that it was a great Buddhist center by then. Besides the existence of Buddhism during the period was rarely appeared in south India and with particular reference to Karnataka.
The excavation may prove, the structures of the period. It may also be noted that the sculptures etc.

Chaityalaya:

The chaitya, vihara called chaityalaya of Aihole consisted of lower and upper stories, the former one has a semi circular chamber and a pillared hall with the figure of Buddha on the ceiling but only has pillared hall in the lower one. It has been dated to circa 7th century A.D.

Similar structure was hardly found in any part of Karnataka therefore, it is indeed a rare example of the Badami in Karnataka, however, the vihara at Rajaghatta is of another type of circa 5th century A.D. The figure on the door Jambs of Aihole Chaitya are belonged to hamsa Jataka, Aramadusaka Jataka and Nalagiri, Valahasa Jataka.

Sculptural Art:

In the history of Buddhist sculptural art of Karnataka various sculptures have already been studied. They are now studied critically.

Buddha:

The sculpture and the relief figures of Buddha are at sannathi, Babrawada, Rajaghatta, Togarsi, Kapu, etc. the earliest Buddha figures are belonged to circa 1st and 2nd century A.D. found at Kanaginahalli near sannathi.

The Buddha images are made on four medium in Karnataka. They are on stone, terracotta, stucco and bronze. The stone images are found in large number. The terracotta images are found only in
the earlier period i.e. Satavahana, where in the stucco figurines are
belonged to circa 4th and 5th century A.D. They are found at Togarsi,
Rajaghatta. The bronze icons are found in the 10th to 11th century at
Kadri.

The Buddha is shown either in standing or seated. The seated
figures are more in number and the standing one are mostly belonged
to Satavahana period. The former category are also found up to the
11th to 12th century A.D.

There are seated Buddha icons made on stone found in the
stupa complex at Kanaginhalli. There bear the inscription on the
basis of the inscription, they are identified as Adi Buddha of the
Satavahana period. In the history of sculptural Buddhism in South
India, the Adi Buddha icons are rarely found therefore the occurrence
of these at Kanaginahalli indeed significant.

They are seated Buddha images at the place, were believed to be
installed at the entrances of the stupa at Kanaginahalli. Besides, the
standing Buddha images of the places are all partially comparable to
those of Nagarjunakonda of the Satavahana period. However, they are
relief figures also at the place of the period.

There are two Buddha images at Aihole were probably installed
earlier in the Chaityalaya are belonged to 3rd century A.D. Two
Buddha images at Haigunda, one at Kapu and Togarsi are belonged
to 4th and 6th century A.D. Where in the sculpture of Avalokitesvara
at Balligavi is made on stone.
The main category of Buddha images was Bodhisathva. There is only one image of Bodhisatva, located at Aihole of 7th century A.D. There are also sculpture of Manjusri/ manjughosa appeared in 10th century A.D. at Kadri in Karnataka.

**Yaksha And Yakshi icons**:

There are yaksha and yakshi icons or relief figures found in Karnataka. The yaksha figures are also found right from 2nd century A.D. Seven yaksha icons are found only at Sannati are exhibited in govt. museum at Gulbarga and one each at K.R.I. K.U.D and University of Mysore. There is also yaksha image located at Harsagundigi near Sannati. The Yaksha figure of Chandravalli is of earlier period. Most of these are similar to that of Nagarjunakonda.

The iconographic features of yaksha at Harasgundgi is distinct, from the others of Sannathi region. Wherein the yaksha has raised his hands and held a lamp in the hands is a rare example of circa 4th century A.D.

The Yakshini images like Maitreya are appeared at Banavasi belonged to circa 3rd century A.D. There is only the figure of Maithreya found so far in Karnataka. The other one is Tarabhagavathi. The available images of the Tarabhaganathi in Karnataka are mostly belonged to 11th to 12th century A.D. The centre of this deity by then, were Balligavi, Koliwada and Dambal within Shimoga and old Dharwad district.

The critical study of the Buddhist art and architecture of Karnataka informs various information, right from circa 2nd to 12th
century A.D. It also shows that, the worship of Buddha made on various materials and the Yaksha (?) was existed right from 2nd century A.D. Where as the worship of Avalokitesvara appears only during the period of Badami chalukya and the Rastrakuta, similarly the worship of yakshi like Tarabhagavathi was existed in 11th to 12th century A.D. inspite of the decline of Buddhism in Karnataka.

**Gurusanagi Stupa:**

The Gurusanagi stupa remains like structural remains of a Buddhist stupa, along with a small stone panel showing Mahabodhi tree, a mutilated image of a Buddhist diety, a stone pedestal roof tile and architectural fragments on the entrance of stupa, as explored by Dr. S.G. Ghatapanadi, dept of history Gulbaga, which are according to him located on the top of the hillock about 2 k.m. away from the village Gurusanagi, on the right bank of the river Bhima.

When the research scholar along with research guide visited the site, only large mud structural remains was found and a socket made out of lime stone, also found, the remains as suggested by S.G. Ghatapanadi are not available (which are compared to sanchi stupa. The period of this stupa remains was compared to 1st and 2nd century A.D. of the Satavahana period. 8

**Ankanakatte Stupa:**

The Ankanakatte situated in Kundapur taluk of South Canera district by the side of national highway, a structure is built with laterite bricks, which is in circular ground plan. The structure
localities is called first, as Ananakatte and identified as Buddhist stupa (site) by Vasant Madhava.

It is built on a circular plinth that has two tiles plinths, and it is filled with mud. That was studied by the scholar along with the research guide.

The circular brick structure can be compared to mudbidre stupa structure.9

**Tunnur Stupa:**

At Tunnuru the remain of the stupa were noticed first by the research supervisor Dr. R. M. Shadakshariah and Jayashree B. Deshamanya (his research student) some of the relics found at the site one used as stupa fence. The other architectural members like Mandokajataka panels (dharma chakra panel, two memorial stones etc of the site indicates that there must be a stupa at a place of the Satavahana period. Many of them are comparable to the stupa complex of Kanaginahalli and its surroundings. 10

**Harasagundgi Stupa:**

At this site, a circular brick stupa structure and the Ayaka platform was found by the team of archaeologist of Bangalore circle but lack of railing. Many parts are in ruins. The upright slabs and crossbase of railing etc of the architectural members are definitely belonging to a stupa structure. In this artistic expression is very less.

The special features is rectangular panels have different kinds of animals like the elephant, bull, boar, tiger, horses and galloping antelope figures etc with Ujjain symbol are also suggesting the
remains of the stupa there and the other remains like large tiles, terracotta figurines etc are belonging to the Satavahana period.

On the basis of the remains Harasagundgi stupa, mound was ascribed to the period of the Satavahana period.

When the scholar visited the site, along with guide it was covered completely with mud but interestingly, the bricks scattered. There-in the scholar found a horse panel made of lime stone, indicates Gautama’s Mahapariniruvana, and chandrasila was also found by the scholar.

On the basis of the measurement of the bricks, it is ascribed to circa 1 to 3rd century.

Apart from these, many of them contain the different episodes of the Jatakas with even label inscription like the Vidhura pandita Jataka, Kapi Jataka, Vesantara Jataka, Sanjiniya Jataka etc.

The anda and chantra part of the stupa are disturbed in the elevation.11

**Kadagodu Stupa** :

The Kadagodu stupa remains was first noticed by A. Sundara which is unique in its own way Dr. Sundara observes the structure of the brick wall construction and the called it as “English bond method”.

The structure ascribed to period of circa 1st to 3rd century A.D.12
Banavasi Vihara:

The inscription of Banavasi, found in the varandah, of the Madhukeshwara temple. The above said record, which was engraved during the times of Satavahanas and the king was Vinukuda Satakarni states about the meritorious gift given by the king, Mahabhuvi (Mahabhoja) his daughter Sivakhandanagasiri, wife of jivaputa, given to Madhukeshwar temple and endowment were given for the construction of Naga, a tank and vihara these three works were completed by the minister, Kadasati, Nataka, the disciple of Damoraka and son of Acharya Jayantaka.

The unfortunate thing is only reference of construction of the Vihara was found, but no structural remains of the Vihara were found so far. The remaining of apsidal structure exposed at the place and a kartikeya sculpture in the vicinity indicates that it was a non Buddhist structure. 13

Mahachaitya of Kanaginahalli:

Stupa: It is already studied and analysed that, the one at Kanaginahalli is Sannati Gulbarga district of Karnataka is also called Mahachaitya. The unique and eventful features are epigraphs are described as sakya Mahachaitya, thereby indicating that it contained the relics of Buddha Sakyamuni, i.e. Gautama Buddha. Later the stupa was completely rebuilt and made at a large complex during the period of Satavahana.
The discovery of Ashokan edicts, an inscribed portrait of Ashoka, with his wife the stupa area suggest, that the stupa could have been built originally during the reign of Ashoka.

The availability of large structural remains of the stupa complex are belonging to the period of the Satavahana.

It is observed that, this Mahachaitya was enlarged and lavishly embellished with sculpture, during the Satavahana period, particularly in 2nd century A.D.

According to Dr. Srinivas Padigar, the form of the Mahachaitya at Kanaginahalli was similar to that of Amaravati.

The sculptured slabs contained some historical scenes connected with Satavahanas in addition to Jataka stories, events of Buddha etc. There are images of seven manushi Buddhas in and an image of Bodhisatva in seated posture. These were probably placed at the cardinal and extra cardinal sides of the main stupa. The occurrence of Manushi Buddha at the place is significant since such figures are rarely appeared in many stupa complexes in South India. They are appeared in some caves of the western India as well as in the torana of Sanchi etc;

Even memorial stones were also found in the surrounding of the stupa. The sculpture of this stupa form, some of the finest specimens of early art in Karnataka in particular and in India in general.14

This is even compared to the plan and elevation of the Krishna valley. The condition of the stupa is in distructive condition. The
architectural numbers like anda is totally missing. The medhi is damaged which is 2.5 meters in height. The joint part of the pillared railings are also misplaced but beautifully scooped.

The remains of the anda was first illustrated by Dr. M. Shesharidi. It was built on bricks and plastered with a thick layer of lime mortar as is found in the Krishna valley according to K.H. Kulkarni.  

Each gate of the stupa has a Chandrasila and a threshold. A pillar inscription depicts to the construction of the prakara wall and the Mahastupa with the financial assistance of Bauddha Shrinki Govidasi a dancer of a merchant guild.  

One more mud stupa mound found in between Sannati and the Nalwar, which is situated near the Chandralamba temple. It was excavated by Archeological survey of India office B,lore circle in the collaboration of the U.K. representative James Howell.  

**Banavasi stupa remains:**  

The remains of the apsidal brick structure have come to light at Banavasi but their religious affiliation is not clear. S.V. Padigar opined that the structure had wooden roofs sloping on all sides covered with tiles.
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