BOOK II - BUDDHISM.

CHAPTER V. - RISE AND SPREAD OF BUDDHISM.

The discontent against the Brahmanical system formed the background for the rise and spread of Buddhism in Andhra. The historical mission of Buddhism had been to bring into a synthesis various and divergent systems of religious thought prevalent in the country and to reconcile the mutually hostile elements into a harmonious social life. We will see in this section to what extent the mission of Buddhism was successful in Andhra.

The innumerable sites that dot Andhradesa from Sālikūrām in the north to Podaganjam in the south and from Coity in the west to Shattippūl in the east are a clear proof of the fact that Buddhism had a popular appeal to the Andhras. For about one thousand years (c 400 B.C. -- A.D. 600), Buddhism had a glorious career in Andhra, shaping her political and cultural destinies in the most formative period of her history. The cosmopolitan spirit of Buddhism removed the tribal barriers and helped them to be united under the Andhras who could thus establish the mighty Satavāhana prosperity and cultural glory. It further gave stimulus to the creative genius of the Andhras which reflected in the magnificent stupas and handsome sculptures of Amaravati-Sāgar-Jūnakouṇḍa. Again it roused in them the spirit of adventure to carry the torch of Buddha Dharma to far off lands. The Andhras too rendered signal service to Buddhism by enriching its philosophy and by spreading it far and wide.

1. Naliniṅkha Dutt, Bhīṣa, P. 77. Rhys Davids, Buddhist India, P. 98.
2. See next page.
5. Reginald Lo Ray, The Culture of South-East Asia, P. 72.
Causes of the triumph of Buddhism in Andhra

The causes for the phenomenal triumph of Buddhism in Andhra are not far to seek. Andhras shared in no small measure the spiritual unrest, springing from the cruel sacrifices and unfair social distinctions. They found in Buddhism a simple religion of self-improvement, which tried to pull down all artificial social distinctions. The Buddha is said to have declared: "As the great streams, 0 disciples, however many they be the Ganga, Yamuna, Achiravati, Sarabhi, Mahi, when they reach the great ocean, lose their old name and their old descent, and bear only one name, "the great ocean", so also my disciples, these four castes, Nobles, Brahmanas, Vaishyas and Sudras, when they, in accordance with the law and doctrine which the Perfect One has preached forsake their home and go into homelessness, lose their old name and paternity, and bear only one designation, "Ascetics, who follow the son of the Sakya house". It may be for this reason, that Buddhism spread like wild fire more quickly among the non-Aryan tribes than among the Aryans. Among the Andhras, the Nagas and Yakgas in particular, did not give up completely their opposition to the expansion of Brahmanism. Throughout India, of all the non-Aryan tribes, the Nagas appear to have evinced special interest in the Buddha and his teachings. The Brahmanical literature describes the Nagas as vile and venomous creatures, disturbing peace and social harmony. The Buddhist literature too depicts them as of irascible

1. Vide supra, p. 68 ff.
temper, caring for the pleasures of skin only. But in the same literature, they appear more as the devoted worshippers of the Buddha and as the ardent followers of his gospel of non-violence. The stories of Nāga Ērapatra who eagerly waited for the appearance of the Buddha on the earth and that of Maqālinda who protected Gautama, the prospective Buddha from the raving storm created by Śakra are too well-known to be overlooked in this context. The Nāgas had their share in the relics of the Buddha on which they built the famous Stūpa of Nāmagrāma. The Jātakas contain stories about the mildness, kindness, charity and generosity of the Nāgas. Similar is the case of Yakṣas. These accounts, connected with the Nāgas and Yakṣas, formed the most favourable themes of the Buddhist sculptures from Andhra and they reveal another important aspect of the historical mission of Buddhism. As Christianity could successfully civilise the barbarian invaders and help their absorption in the Society of Medieval Europe, Buddhism could persuade the half-civilised tribes like the Yakṣas and Nāgas to give up their primitive habits and reconcile them to the Aryan way of life. The Nāgas and their kings in the Lower Kṛṣṇa Valley, like

3. C. Sivaramamurti, op. cit., pls. lxi, Fig. 1.
7. Per Yakṣas in the Kṛṣṇa Sculptures. Ref. Longhurst, Nagarjunakonda, PL xlix, a and b.
8. This is the story of Yakṣa Avalaka from Samyuttaṇi kāya which combines the Mahābhārata stories of Ṛkaśura and Yakṣa Graña. In the Madras Govt. Museum, there are the following sculptures of Ammavati. i) Nāgas protecting the Stūpa, Exhibits Nos. 182, 743.
10. iii) Buddha represented as a five-hooded snake, No. 174 etw.

The Mahāvyasa refers to a Maqālipāṭtana (Ch. 36, P. 144). Dr. F.S. Bantrey takes it to be Maqālipāṭtana and identifies it with Maqālipāṭtana in the Kṛṣṇa District on the coast. "Rise and Growth of Buddhism in Andhra", India, XXXI, P. 62.
their North Indian brethren enthusiastically welcomed Buddhism and greatly promoted its cause in their own regions.

Another important factor that helped the spread of Buddhism was that its teachings did not come to the Andhras as entirely new. Buddhism was not only a revolt against the decadent Vedic ritualism but also an attempt at the synthesis of all the best elements in Aryan and non-Aryan religions. H. Jacobi traces certain important features of the new religions — Buddhism and Jainism — to the primitive currents of religious speculations which were essentially non-Aryan, whereas A.L. Basham concludes that the heretical religions — Buddhism, Jainism and Ajivikism — sprang against "the primitive animist background". Especially, there is much in common between the Buddhist principles of Śīla, Samādhi and Prajñā and the cardinal principle of Śaivism, namely Yoga. It may be recalled that the Paśupati of Harappa was a Mahāyogī. The Buddhist symbolism and iconography have drawn very liberally upon Śaivism. The seated Buddha with deer on either side resembles the Paśupati of Mahenjodaro. The Triratna symbol is only the adaptation of the trident or the crown of that Paśupati. The Swastika which figures prominently in the Buddhist sculpture is found to be in use among the Indus people and in the Rāmāyana, it is mentioned as the plan of some of the

2. A.L. Basham, Ajivikas, P. 224.
3. Vide supra, P. 60.
5. Ibid.
Further, the Swastika has Nāga associations as noticed above. At Nāgarjunakonda, three Stūpas with the Swastika base have been found. The Padmanābha Stūpa also had a Swastika base. In the relic casket of Shāṭṭīrūla, pearls were arranged in the shape of a Swastika. Thus, Buddhism attempted at a synthesis of different practices and at social unity and cohesion. These aspects of Buddhism appear to have had greater appeal to the Andhras among whom it became popular in a short time.

Date of Andhra Buddhism:

Both from the foreign and native literary accounts, we learn that Buddhism made its way into Andhra even during the lifetime of the Buddha. The Chinese traveller, Yuan Chwang recorded a tradition that the Buddha visited Andhra and personally preached the Dharma. Describing a monastery in An-To-La (Andhra), he says: "Near the south-west of the monastery was an Aśoka Tope where the Buddha preached, displayed miracles and received into his religion a countless multitude." But similar stories are told about the Buddha's visit to distant places like Sūrpara and much credence cannot be given to such accounts.

1. Rāmāyaṇa, Sundarakanda, Sarga, 4.
2. Vide supra, P. 45.
5. Ibid. Pl. IV, Fig. 13.
7. "Dekkhan at the time of Buddha", i.a., XVI, P. 49.
The Buddhist literature contains references to Áśāka, Sulaka, Andhānagari and Tālivāha. The Suttanipāta narrates the story of Bāvari, a Brāhmaṇ teacher of Áśāka, who sent sixteen of his disciples to meet the Buddha and to find out his claims to arhathood. These disciples met the Buddha at Rājgrha and listened to his discourses. All of them became arhats. One of them Pungiya, a nephew of Bāvari remained Anagami. Pingiya returned to Bāvari and recounted to him what he had learnt from the Buddha. Hearing Pingiya's exposition of the Buddha's teaching, Bāvari also attained arhatthood. The example of Bāvari's disciples should have been followed by many more inquisitive Andhras who rushed to the north to have the benefit of instruction in the noble eight-fold path by the Buddha himself.

The Vimānavatthu commentary contains the story of the king of the Assakas who was ordained by Mahākūtyāna, one of the foremost disciples of the Buddha. The number of monks from Andhra appears to have rapidly increased and they came to be popular in the north as the Andhakas. The Mahāvagga mentions an Andhakavāna near Cava-vastī and Andhakovinagā at Rājgrha. These might be the monasteries or rest-houses built specially for the use of the pious Andhakas, monks or other pilgrims from Andhradāśa.

1. The commentary on the Suttanipāta says that in the Andhaka country are Assaka and Mulaka. P.S. Sastry, "Rise and Growth of Buddhism in Andhra", XXXI, P. 69 ff.
2. Vide supra, P. 19.
4. This is a stage in the process of attaining arhathood. The stages are: śrāvaka, Sthāvira, Anagami, arhat. Ibid., Pp. 262-271.
5. P.S. Sastry, op. cit.
7. K.B. Subrahmanyan, B.K., P. 6.
The 13th Rock Edict of Aśoka clearly states that the Ādhiras were living within Rāja Viśaya and were already following the Dharma. Aśoka convened the Third Buddhist Council at Pātaliputra, probably, in 247 B.C. According to the Kathāvatthu, the Andhakas took a leading part in the discussions at the Third Council. Regarding the date of the Kathāvatthu, Mrs. Rhys Davids says: "—if we accept the tradition followed by Buddhaghosha, the putative author of our commentary and assign Aśoka’s Council of Pāṭana as the date when the Kathāvatthu was completed, we can not only fix this work in time — a rare luxury for Indologists! — but assign a considerable, if indefinite priority in time to these literary sources, so accurately quoted, which it invests with such constraining authority for all Sasana disputants".

It was after the Third Buddhist Council that Aśoka sent Buddhist missionaries to foreign countries as well as to the non-Buddhist parts of India. We do not find Andhadeśa in the list of the Indian states that received these missions, though her neighbours, Mahārāṣṭra, Aparanta, Vanavāsa and Mahīṣamanjala were included. This omission of Andhra from the list of non-Buddhist Indian States, the statement of the 13th Rock Edict and the evidence of the Kathāvatthu

1. Andhra Pulindasu sarvatrapa devānām priyāśya dharma-manusya-anti (jñāb) sarvatara. (Sanskritised version of the Edict.) D.C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions, 1, P. 39.
3. Ibid., P. 10.
5. The following are the South Indian regions and the missionaries they received.

1. Mahīṣamanjala Mahācēva
2. Vanavāsa Rākkita
3. Aparantā Yōna Dharma Rākhita

about the participation of the Anshekas in the Third Council—all put together make it clear that Buddhism had already become popular in Andhra much earlier than the convocation of the Third Council.

This popularity of Buddhism with the Andhras during the reign of Asoka is also attested by the Ceylonese Buddhist chronicle Mahāvamsa. It says that Mahadeva, who was sent to Mahiṣarāṇaḍala had a large following in Pallavabogga which is identical with the present-day Palnad, in the Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh, wherein is located the famous Mahāyana Tīrtha of Śrīparvata-Nāgarjunakoṇḍa. Invited by Devānampiya Tissa of Ceylon, Mahadeva attended the consecration ceremony of the Suvarṇamālāka Stūpa or the Ruwewali Stūpa at Anuradhapura. The Mahāvamsa further states that Mahadeva was accompanied to Ceylon by 14,60,000 monks from Pallavabogga. Though it seems to be an exaggeration, the number may be taken to mean "a large following", and it can be assumed that the propagation of Dharma and other activities connected with it even in Andhra were under the general supervision of the great monk and missionary, Mahadeva.

1. Turner, Mahāvamsa, P. 171.
3. Turner, op. cit.
4. Ibid.
Asoka & Andhra Buddhism.

The reign of Asoka forms an important epoch in the history of Andhra Buddhism. It is well known that in several ways, Asoka raised Buddhism, which was still a local cult to the proud position of an international religion. As Andhra was within the Mauryan imperial domain, it is reasonable to assume that the local chieftains and their subjects enthusiastically responded to Asoka's Dharmagaha and carried the torch of the Buddha Dharma to every corner of their land.

The Kalinga War: The event that turned Gañḍa Asoka into Dharma Asoka was the famous war of Kalinga,¹ the only war waged by that monarch. The kingdom of Kalinga at that time extended up to the mouths of the river Gódāvari on the east coast. In his Ancient Geography, Cunningham says: "The Calingas are mentioned by Pliny — to the south, the territory of Calingac extended as far as the promontory Calingon and the town Dançagudra or Dançagula which is said to be 635 Roman miles or 574 British miles from the mouth of the Ganges. Both the distance and the name point to the great port town of Coringa as the promontory or Coringon which is situated on a projecting point of land at the mouth of the Godavari river."² Cunningham further discusses the description of Kalinga as given by the Chinese traveller, Yuan Chwang. The Chinese traveller says that Kio-linga-kia was the capital of Kalinga and it was 1,400 or 1,500 li or 233 miles south-west of Ganjam.³ Cunningham remarks: "both bearing and distance point either to Rajahmundry or to Coringa on

2. Cunningham, Ancient Geography, P. 392.
the sea coast, the first being 250 miles and the other 246 miles in the same direction. It is therefore clear that the present Cirkar districts of Andhra namely Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari were included in ancient Kalinga, and this is supported by inscriptions and literature. The Bodhārī grant of the Eastern Chāluṣya king, Rukkiliyavaṇis 1, issued from Elamanchili describes that Bodhārī is situated in Nadym kalinga. The Telugu Kavya, Kṣurubāhamcaritra of Manabana states that Elamanchili is situated in Kalinga. There is some controversy regarding the identification of Kalinganagara, the capital of Kalinga. B.B. Lal has tried recently to locate it at Sisupalgarh. But earlier scholars like R.D. Banerjea identified Kalinganagara with Mukhalingam-Kalingapatnam in the Srikakulam district. From all this, it is therefore reasonable to think that the Northern Circars of Andhra both suffered the ravages of the Kalinga war and enjoyed the compensatory work undertaken by Dhāra Asoka.

After the great change, the activities of Asoka consisted mainly in: (i) issuing edicts with instructions to his officers with a view to liberalise administration and promote social happiness through the spread of Dharma; (ii) building Stupas and Viharas for the benefit of the Buddhist monks and (iii) erecting pillars at places of religious importance.

1. Cunningham, op. cit.
5. S. Subba Rao has ably summarised the views and these scholars in his article "Kalinganagara" in J.A.I.S., IV, pp. 57—62.
Asokan Edicts: The peninsular portion of Aśoka's empire appears to have been divided into two main provinces with Kumāra Mahāmaitraś and with headquarters at Samāpā or Tōsali in Kalinga and at Suvarṇagiri in the south respectively. There is a difference of opinion regarding the identification of Suvarṇagiri. Dr. Hultzsch identified it with the country around Maski which abounds in gold-workings and suggests that "it may perhaps be identified with its synonym Kanakagiri south of Maski and north of the ruins of Vijayanagara". But this identification is objected to on the ground that Kanakagiri has not so far yielded any Mauryan associations, either archaeological or epigraphical. On the other hand Jonnagiri, a village in the Pattikonda Taluk of Kurnool District is held identical with Suvarṇagiri for the following reasons: (1) In pure Telugu the component Jonnagiri cannot be sustained etymologically because Jonna (= millet) is pure Telugu and Giri (= hill) is Sanskrit. The combination of a Sanskrit with Telugu is not generally favoured. Therefore Jonnagiri must have been a corrupt form of Suvarṇagiri (Suvanagiri). (ii) The famous Varṇagudi Rock Edicts of Aśoka were discovered just in the vicinity or within the revenue limits of Jonnagiri. Recently, twenty miles away from Jonnagiri, another Minor Rock Edict was discovered at Rājula Mandagiri. Therefore it is more likely that Jonnagiri in the Kurnool District is identical with Suvarṇagiri, a seat of Mauryan viceroyalty and the District of Isila, identified with Siddapura, was subordinated to it.

4. Cal., xii, p. 211.
About the Yerragudi Edict Dr. Hookerji remarks: "This Minor Rock Edict is unique in its new matter which is not found in any other of its versions. Its meaning, however, is not quite clear. Aśoka seems to be extending here the scope of his preaching of Dharma. He appears to enjoin its preaching among both the civil and military classes, and especially among the youth, the student population of the country as its future citizens who should be trained in disciplined life. The teachers are also enlisted by him, along with the administrative officers, the Mahābājras, in the work of carrying his Dharma or message to the student population as the appropriate sphere of their work, while the rural welfare officers, the Rāstrikas, are to work for the same mission in the country-side in their charge."¹

Aśoka Pillar: Very recently, a fragment of Aśoka's pillar was discovered at Amaravati.² The Buddhist monarch erected pillars "to commemorate Dharmavijaya -- dhamma thambhāni, on the principal thoroughfares leading out of his capital city or in some important places connected with the life of the Buddha and the history of Buddhism."³ The Amaravati fragment contains a portion of an inscription. Commenting on it, D.C. Sircar says that it is the first pillar inscription of Aśoka so far discovered in South India and it resembles the Cīrṇar version of Aśoka's Rock Edict. He concludes that the present inscription seems to suggest that the Amarāvati stupa was built by Aśoka about the middle of the 3rd century B.C.⁴

¹ B.K. Hookerji, Aśoka, P. 250–261.
⁴ D.C. Sircar, op.cit.
This view is supported by the Ceylonese legends of the Buddha's tooth relic. They refer to the construction of a stupa at Diamond Sands by Dharma Asoka. Fergusson and others have identified the place with the region of Dhanyakatak.

Asokan Monuments: The Mahavamsa tells us that Asoka built 84,000 viharas with stupas all over his empire. Even in Southern India, the sites that the tradition associates with him are numerous, but it scarcely possible to identify them clearly. The Chinese traveler, Yuan Chwang refers to the stupas built by Asoka in Andhra. According to him: (1) there is one such Stupa not far from the capital of Kalinga and it was 100 feet high; (2) another Stupa built by Asoka stood to the south-west of Agala near Vangi, then the capital of Andhra; (3) one more Stupa existed to the south-east of the capital of Chu-li-wa. It is rather difficult to identify these places mentioned by Yuan Chwang. However, some of the very old Buddhist sites in Andhra such as Bhattiprolu, Amaravati, Sathipuram, Sankaram and Guptapalli reveal Mauryan association.

Bhattiprolu: The Stupa of Bhattiprolu is generally regarded as the oldest in Andhra. The relic casket inscriptions from the stupa

2. Fergusson, Tree and Serpent Korahin, p. 157-159.
6. Ibid. P. 212.
8. A. Rea, South Indian Buddhist Antiquities, pp. 7-17, Fie.II-X.
clearly reveal that it was built on the corporeal relic of the Buddha. Bühler was of opinion that the characters of these inscriptions “cannot be placed later than 200 B.C. but may be some what earlier”. The Ceylonese accounts mention the relic stūpas in the country of Majorika, which is located at the mouth of the Krishna. The stūpa of bhīṣṭiprōṭu might be one of them.

4 Amaravati: Amaravati, the greatest centre of Buddhism in South India was already renowned in the time of Asoka. According to Candavyuha, Amaravati became a seat of Ārya Manjuśrī, and the Manjuśrīvimalakalpa states that the stūpa of Amaravati was built on the bodily relic of the Buddha. At Amaravati, two prakrit inscriptions are found containing the word Dhanakataka in the Mauryan characters of about 300 B.C. Commenting on the recently discovered stele at Amaravati, Ghosh and Sarkar remark that the first stage of Amaravati was earlier than those of Sanchi and Bodhgaya. The inscription on the stele reads, "Dhanakataka Vanda gaṭhī", which means that at Dhanakataka there was a gaṭhī called "Vanda". The recently discovered fragment of the pillar Edict, mentioned above, has clearly established Asoka's association with Dhanakataka. It may be suggested that Asoka erected a pillar at Amaravati, probably because it was already a famous Buddhist Tīrtha.

1. The Inscriptions Read:
(a) Buddha Ādiṣṭhānī mahāpiṇḍā maṇḍapam, Casket Inc. Co. P.
(b) Buddhāśirāmā ukābhantum, Casket No. 1, Ins. A.
7. J. Burgess, op. cit.
9. Ibid.
Salihundam is another early centre of Buddhism in Andhra. It is a small hill on the right bank of river Vamsadhara in the Srikakulam district just four miles from the east coast. In the inscriptions found locally, the hill is called Salipataska and the words give rise to different meanings: (1) Salihundam = Rice Hill (sali = rice in Sanskrit; hundam = hill in Oriya). Salipataska also may mean the same, pataska being a variant of Vatika. (2) The other view is that it is the corrupt form of Salua Patika which means a box (Patika) of bones (salua), implying thereby that the stupa on the hill was built on a bone relic, probably of the Buddha. In fact four relic caskets were found at Salihundam and one of these contains a relic, probably a piece of bone.

There is evidence that Salihundam was a centre of Buddhism from the 3rd century B.C., and there is every reason to believe that the stupa was built in the time of Asoka.

(1) The rouletted pottery that is discovered at Salihundam resembles that of Srikamadou and Brahmagiri. Some of the pottery pieces were inscribed and the characters resemble the early script of Bhattacharyya. One inscription reads Bahasanasa and appears to be the gift of the inscribed object to the Buddhist establishment, that was already in existence.

1. R. Subrahmanyan, Salihundam, A Buddhist site in Andhra Pradesh, passim.
2. Ibid. P. 3 ff.
4. Ibid.
5. R. Subrahmanyan, op. cit., Fig. 13 Nos. 3a and 3c, P. 44.
(2) The Stūpa of Śālihunḍam bears close resemblance to those of Bhattiprolu and Amaravati. The Vihāra is called Kaṭṭhārāma or Kaṭṭārāma. It sounds like Kaṭṭhāra Sutta delivered by the Buddha to the faggot-carriers of Kōsala when he visited the place. Kōsala is adjoining to Kalinga and the Vamśadhārā flows through Kōsala.

(3) Yuan Chwang mentioned that Aśoka Maurya built a stūpa not far away from the capital or Kalinga, where the Buddha personally preached the Dharma. Many scholars identify the capital of ancient Kalinga with Kalingapattanam, which is very near Śālihunḍam. Yuan Chwang says that the Stūpa was 100 feet high, implying that it was on a hill. The account of Yuan Chwang agrees with Śālihunḍam.

(4) Recently a Brahmi inscription was found at Śālihunḍam. It reads: Dharmaśāno Aśoka sitiro, which means "of the Dharmaśāla Aśoka-siri." On Paleographical grounds, the inscription is assigned to a date about 2nd century A.D. There is no evidence so far showing that the region was ever under a local king with the name or title, Aśoka. It is well known that Aśoka Maurya was famous as Dharma Aśoka or Dharmaśāla Aśoka. Śālihunḍam is in Kalinga which was annexed by Aśoka after a bloody battle which turned him into a Dharmaśāla. Samāpa which is near modern Jaugada was the administrative seat of the Mauryas and Śālihunḍam is not too far from it.

2. Ibid.
4. T.N. Ramachandran, op. cit., P. 137.
   According to the Therigatha commentary, Aśoka's brother Tissa spent his retirement in Kalinga with his teacher Dharma Rakkhita. B.C. Law, Tribes in Ancient India, P. 160.
6. R. Subrahmanya, Śālihunḍam Etc., pp. 121-123.
Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the Stūpa and Vihāra were built in the time of Asoka and the tablet recording that historical fact was inserted in the 2nd century A.D. in the course of renovation.¹

Sankaram: Sankaram² is another of the early Buddhist Tirthas of Andhra. It is located on two small hills, Bolijamakunda and Lingalantesu near Anakapalli in the district of Visakhapatnam. It abounds in structural and monolithic stūpas, Caityas and Vihāras. Regarding the age of the earliest monuments of Sankaram, Rea asserts: "I think it probable that the monoliths may be ascribed to a time corresponding to that of the shrines erected or founded by Asoka."³ The sculptures in all the caves and on their facade generally are crude and primitive in design and none have the finished technique so strikingly observale at places like Amaravati where the highest phase of the sculptor's art is so lavishly presented. According to Rea, the crudeness points to either of the factors: (1) it may represent a very early period of undeveloped workmanship or (2) a late period of decadence. But the Buddhists did not survive sufficiently long after the Amaravati epoch for any such decadence to have so strikingly manifested itself. The inference therefore is that the period represented by these sculptures is earlier than Amaravati or prior to first century. The earliest of these remains are the monoliths and they may "probably belong to the period of Asoka himself". But one exception to the primitive character of the cave sculptures, as Rea points out, is the small panel on the side wall.

¹ R. Subrahmanyan, op. cit.
² A. Rea, A.S.R., 1907-1908, Note on page 158.
³ Ibid. P. 161-162.
of the sculptured cave on the north-west slope of the east hill. The principal sculpture of the shrine and the one which would be first cut out is the large figure of the Buddha on the back wall. The small panel is a subsidiary one and is only a piece of apparently later wall decoration. It is unlikely that it was cut before the main image and it may then be contemporary with or subsequent to it. If it were of the same date it would exhibit the same crudeness as the other sculptures but this is far from being the case and it brings to recollection figures seen on the sculptured groups of Amaravati marbles. This individuality then points to its being contemporary with them and thus of a date later than the other sculptures of the cave.1

Rea further argues that the structures themselves "are of very early date is evident from the large size bricks (17" x 9½" x 3"). Such large brick have never been found in southern buildings, which date later than the 2nd century A.D. The extent of the remains and their varied character show that the site has been a peculiarly important one. It bears evidences of having been added throughout the centuries of Buddhist supremacy.2

Guṇḍupalli: Guṇḍupalli is supposed to be among the oldest of the Buddhist monuments of South India.3 This is a small village near Ellore in the West Godavari District. There is a large Buddhist Tīrtha on the hill near the village. The caves on the hill resemble those of Lomasrāṣṭa excavated by Aśoka in the Barabar hills.4 The recent discovery of a Brahmi inscription of king Kharavēla of Kalings of the 2nd century B.C.,5 proves the antiquity of the caves.

1. A. Rea, ASR, 1907-1908, Note on Page 161-162.
2. Ibid.
3. ASR, (Southern Circle), 1916-1917, P. 30-36.
5. R. Subrahmanyan, The Brahmi Inscription of Kharavela from Guṇḍupalli (ASR, 1915).
Thus during the reign of Asoka, Andhradeśa became a stronghold of Buddhism which spread from Śālihundam in the north to Bhaṭṭiprōlu in the south and Jumagiri in the west. The Bhaṭṭiprōlu inscriptions mention a number of Śramanas. The others mentioned might have been Upāsakas. In each of the Tīrthas, the monks appear to have organised themselves into Göthis. The Bhaṭṭiprōlu inscriptions mention a Sinagothi where as the stele inscription from Amarāvati contains the name of a gothi as Vanda.3 There was general building activity throughout the land, probably under the supervision of the local chieftains such as Rāja Kuborska of Bhaṭṭiprōlu and inspired by Mahadeva of Mahiṣamandala. From the stūpas of Bhaṭṭiprōlu and Amarāvati, it appears that the Andhra Buddhist had a fascination for huge stūpas or Caityas which ultimately exerted profound influence on the subsequent development of Buddhist thought and practice in the land.

2. Ibid.