

**CAVE ARCHITECTURE IN NASIK
(SPECIAL REFERENCES OF TRIRASHMI CAVES)**

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Abstract :

At the outset I would like to state that this is a working paper. there may be a number of gaps in the resources used and in the understanding of the subject at hand.

While we studying the history of any country, the local history is very important part in it. So the object of my paper is focus on the cave architecture in pandava caves in nashik.Rise and growth of Buddha dhamma starts new era in India. It begins and introduced new type of architecture. After the Buddha's mahaparinirvan his followers starts to build stupas and chaitya, in the memory of Buddha. Most of chaitya and Vihars are carved by kings, merchants but there is Some Vihars were carved by donation of common people also.

Key Words : Cave Architecture, Special references of trirashmi caves

Introduction :

In India there was more than 1200 rock –cut caves .and above in these caves, more than 800 Caves are in maharashtra.becouse in Maharashtra's sahyadri mountain range is useful to carved rock cut caves.

In Maharashtra there were more than eight hundred caves of Buddha dhamma.Above these caves 70% caves were before 300 b.c.in these caves, we can found More than 222 inscriptions, which we can read. According to 156 inscriptions we could know the name of donors (who is funding to build)In all above these names we can't found the names of 24

donars. And among remaining Donors 35% percent donors were merchants, 23% were ruler or their relatives, 12% were Administrative officers, 12% were bhikhu's and bhikhuni's and 10% were farmers and 8% Were outsiders. Form all this stactical data we could know that merchants were main donors Of Buddha dhamma, and also this dhamma was supported by different lairs of society.

Cave Architecture :

1) The rock cut Buddhist architecture falls into two broad chronological and sectarian Divisions .the first includes those which can on stylistic and epigraphic grounds, be placed in the Centuries immediately preceding the Christian era. theresalient feature in the absence of Buddha image In rock cut caves which assign them to the Hinayana sect of Buddhism.

The second division includes those which belong to Mahayana and were excavated later than 2nd century A.D. Anyhow these architectural manifestations betray a long tradition and sustained progress in the sphere of architecture.

The Buddhist architecture in mainly divided in to 1) the chaitya-grihas (Prayer halls) and 2) The vihars. The origin of the Buddhist stupa traced to pre Buddhist burial mounts. The relic was generally kept in a casket that was placed in a smaller chamber in the centre of the stupa. cave monasteries probably grew out of the initial attempt that the system soon out grew .where the location of the monastery was on trade route in a hilly area, the rock cut caves was natural particularly, in the western Deccan with its layered volcanic rock, relatively easier to excavate .the ground plan of vihara, monastery, was based on its being the residence for a group of monks and therefore evolved from domestic architecture. A large courtyard space was surrounded by rows of small rooms.

The earliest monuments that call for notice are the chaitya and Vihars of the north western Deccan. These are often called caves when applied these Wonderful excavations many of which are large well planned temples and monasteries skillfully Chiseled out of the solid rock with infinite forethought and patience.

All though in Hinayana Buddhism the Buddha was never represented in sculptured Form, but his presence was indicated by a throne, a footstool, cushions and other symbols. The Buddha image came in to use in later Mahayana Buddhism, and then it was introduced

in to some of early caves as Nasik and Kanheri. The Hinayana rock cut monasteries and shrines are all situated in Maharashtra state within a radius of two hundred miles around Nasik.

The Vihars are monastic houses excavated near the chaitya in secluded places where the monks found freedom to pursue their religious observances with distraction. From a small beginning in course of time they developed a full complement of rooms; a dormitory, common Room, a refectory and so on, besides cells for individual monks. At Nasik this type of Vihars is seen, in its most decorative form.

Caves in Nasik are located at 8 k.m. away from Nasik city. This Mountain known as Trirashmi Hills. Caves are located midway up the Trirashmi hills facing north east. There are all together twenty four caves, these caves are locally known as Pandava caves but actually these are Buddhist caves. Though many of these are small and incomplete but some very important caves in this group which can represent the Buddhist architecture.

The important caves in this group are caves no.18 which is chaitya and cave no 3, 10, & 20 are Vihars. Among the monasteries cave no. 3, 10, 20, have out shone others in size planning & Splendors have elicited and acclamation on account of their unique combination of the architectural Grandeur and sculptural embellishment.

Cave no. 1 :

In this cave there are four stambha's at front side. On the upper side of stambha We find mahirap. In left & right side there is two cells, this cave is incomplete.

Cave no 2 :

It is a small cave, in this cave sculptur of Buddha in padamasana position; at right Side we can see some other Buddha sculptur.

Cave no 3 :

This cave built by Gautamiputra Satkarni For the Buddha bhikshus so it is named as 'Gautamiputra cave' it is also known as 'Devi lene' which is written in inscription in cave no19. That, this cave is built by Gautamiputra Satkarni in memory of his mother 'Gautmi

balshri '1. This is largest vihar among the all monasteries in front of the main hall there is a big Varandha. In varanda there is 6 stambha's which chisele out from rock is beautifully. In hall there is bench of three sides and 18 cells in the hall .seven on the right side, five on the left side and six in the back side .the stup is beautifully carved on the back wall of cave. On the top of stambha. There is stambha pattika, on the top, and several of animals are carved on it.

Cave no10 :

This cave is known as 'nahapana cave', because it contain six inscription of the family of nahapana. It is the scound largest vihara in this series and one of the most intresting, it is purer in style and superior in excavation. This cave is known for its decorated pillars which considered being the best specimen of this age in this cave we find longest inscription on the back wall of varanda. from this inscription we find information that shatrapa nahapan's son in law ushavadaat and his wife dakshamitra donated land and money. For this cave.

Cave no 18 :

In this group of caves no 18 is chaitya griha which is enriched with pilasters with bell capital alternated by representation of stupa on the background of lattical screens.

Cave no 20 :

It is the largest vihar among all the caves. This cave had long varanda, three doors for main hall in the hall there is one smaller hall and in this hall we find huge sculptor of Buddha, in' *dhammchakra pravartan mudra*'. When we entered in the main hall we find 8 cells in the left side 8 cells in the right side and three at front side one bhikshu named bopki started for this cave, and wife of bhavgopa completed this cave. We find this information from the inscription in the cave. Important thing is the sthamba in these cave carvings depict people, lions and elephants.

Conclusion :

In the pandava caves we can see the mixture of architecture of hinyana and Mahayana

Buddhist sects. These caves are first excavated by the hinyana sect .in later times not only some Of the earlier caves were altered, reconditioned and embellished with the figures of Lord Buddha and bodhisattvas, but a few new ones were added. The main beauty of these caves lies in its dignified façade, effectively composed and carved. The fleshy bodies, heavily emphasized sashes turbans and other details of the costume are strictly within the Indian tradition. The beautiful pillar capitals, adored with the animals and composite figures with the riders. Early Buddhist caves were located in natural areas, away from cities to avoid distraction of material world but not too far from inhabited places, to keep contact with people .these rock cut caves provided lodging for travelling traders. There was the direct participation of many monks in trade is becoming apparent from recent studies of the early Buddhist text, and the votive inscriptions at monastic sites. So guilds of artisans, merchants, small land owners and some local rulers were donars as well as some monks and nuns are also donors of the caves. Rock cut monasteries and charity's may did not permit much evaluation in architectural style , but they occur with remarkable consistency at sites controlling the trade route and the passes of Deccan such as bagh , Nasik, junnar, kanheri ,bhaja, kondane and karle.a chain of largely free standing stupa site and monasteries along the eastern cost also suggest a route. These caves carved in natural cliff were especially well suited for Indian conditions, they were cool in summer, pleasant in winter and spiritually were part of natureThe inscriptions which found in the pandava caves are most useful for political history of India. From this inscriptions we know during satvahana period Nasik region was most important geographical region many of these have given valuable information about political, social , economical and cultural situation, of ancient times.

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