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ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF KUDAL SANGAM IN SOLAPUR DISTRICT (ARCHEOLOGICAL SECTION)

Miss. Anuradha Ramkishan Sonkamble

ABSTRACT

Solapur City has a glorious history from the ancient period to modern period. It was a commercial city also so many commercial routes were passing from North India to South India through solapur. Historically, Economically and Culturally Solapur district had significant place in Maharashtra. So many good sculptors were living in this part with the help of ancient dynasties like Satvahanas, Early Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas, Later Chalukyas and Yadvas.

KEYWORDS: Art and Architecture , Historically, Economically.

INTRODUCTION :

The sculptors made tremendous work in art and architecture. So many temples were created in ancient period in Kudal Sangam. Kudal Sangam is a centre of art and architecture in Solapur district. This temple is the oldest temple in the Maharashtra. Beautiful and Heavenly sculptures, *beautifully carved pillars of temples, beautiful and attractive statues of Gods and Goddesses are seen at the Kudal Sangam.

HISTORY OF KUDAL SANGAM.

Kudal Sangam is situated in South Solapur. In Hindu religious tradition a confluence of

rivers is considered to be a holy place. There is a holy confluence of two river's Bheema and Seena at Kudal Sangam. The pattern of confluence looks like Y letter in English. At Kudal Sangam we find ancient temples dedicated to Shri. Sangmeshwar, Shri. Harihareshwar, Shri. Krishna and Shri. Mahabai Hanuman. This region of solapur district was under the realm of Mourya's, Satvahana's, Rashtrakuta's, Chalukya's and Yadava's. Some of the rulers of above dynasties ruled this region.

When the region of solapur was under the rules of the Chalukya's of Kalyani the temple was built up. The king of Chalukya Vikramaditya 6th, King Sangmeshwar 3rd and others were fond of art and architecture at Kudal Sangam. There is an inscription which gives us information about when the temple was built up. The inscription refers to the year 1018 A.D.¹ So the temple had been constructed in the 11th century A.D. Already Solapur district was a commercial place which was situated on the ancient



commercial route from north India to south India². Because of the economical prosperity vertical stability The art and architecture was flourished in ancient period at solapur district. Good sculptors and suitable rocks were available during that period. The inscription at Kudal Sangam is in Kannada Script. Famous scholar of inscription Shri Anand Kumbhar has published this inscription³. The temple architecture and inscription at Kudal Sangam proves that they are older than Rameshwar of Tirth, Mallikarjun of Akkalkot, and Siddheshwar of Mardi. The inscription also mentions about the grant of land for this temple.

VARIETY OF TEMPLES AT KUDAL SANGAM

Kudal Sangam is a holy place because of the confluence of two rivers Bheema and Seena. In Hindu mythology such places were always created for holy works, religious ceremonies and temples. So we can see at every confluence in India beautiful temple was built. Kudal Sangam is on the border of Karnataka and Maharashtra. In Karnataka Shiva is the main God and Vishnu is in Maharashtra. So Shaivism was popular in Karnataka and Vaishnavism in Maharashtra. But in ancient period there was a conflict between these two sects. To finish the animosity between Shaivism and Vaishnavism, Harihara sculpture was built. In this temple we found a fusion of two great Gods that is Shiva and Vishnu but there is no reference in Hindu mythology connect with this fusion of two Gods but we get literally archaeological evidences for this⁴. The temples of Kudal Sangam are the good evidences for the concept of fusion of two Gods. There are four temples in Kudal Sangam of Gods Sangameshwara, Harihareshwar, Krishna and Mahabali Hanuman. temple truly this group of art and architecture in ancient period. The areas of these temples are vast and big but in present these temples are in dilapidated condition. But the parts of temples and some icons and sculptures are intact so the Kudal Sangam has become a place for the new researchers. In this research paper I am going to focus on Harihareshwar temple, it's art and architecture.

TEMPLE OF HARIHARESHWAR

This is one of the most important temple at Kudal Sangam which is known as Shri. Harihareshwar temple. It is as an instance of artistic and sculptural excellence. It was buried under the soil, mud and stones. Due to excavation work of some local scholars the harihareshwar temple came into light. This temple is situated at the lowest level of main temple Sangmeshwar. The temple has a facade and audience hall, a swargamandap and a porch which is open to sky and sanctum⁵.

The description of harihareshwar Temple

1. Facade - In the facade the ceiling of facade bears miniature carving of a lotus figure and a pendant. On the both sides of this facade there could be two figures of dwarfpal or guards. When such stone figure was discovered in the courtyard during excavation. Almost all pillars of the facade have beautifully carved on them.

2. The audience hall - The audience hall has two entrances. Both sides of the audience hall are flanked by stone seats or resting place with chequered design. The pillars and pilasters are profusely carved above the door frame on the ganesh patti some very beautiful images of temples and spires reflecting north and south Indian styles are carved. There are two images of cobra's carved on a tall stone piece placed between two pillars at a distance of half a meter from the entrance. In the middle of it there is a unique figure of a woman with five bodies carved on it, if we look at it from any angle, it appears symmetrical and perfect. The head fits in well with every body. The sealing has three parts, at the left side of the sealing there are images of lord Krishna and Gopies and at the right side of it on the ceiling of Shivagarbhagruha there is a carving of Shiva and Gana.

3. Swargamandap or Rangamandap - Presently this swargamandap is roofless but earlier it must have a flat rising roof. There must be two lotus figures carved on both sides of the sealing and in the middle there must be some carving because the carved slabs of sealing were discovered when the mound of earth was being removed from temple yard. On the inner wall of swargamandap there are some sculptures which are beautifully carved like load bearer or kichak, vyals, kalbhairava and sursundaris⁶.

4. Antaral or Antechamber - Antechamber has two entrances and there are two garbhagruhas. The sealing has a lotus figure carved on it. There are no columns in Antaral. In the centre between two garbhagruhas shrines there

is a wall bearing carved image of ganesh in relief and the other shrine of another garbhagruha is Shiv and Murlidhar. The two door frames have five dwar rakshakas with subtle and beautifully carved. The images of Laxmi and Parvati are carved on the ganesh Patti. The door frame has an artistic carving of chonch figures. Like this the art and architecture of Kudal Sangam is heavenly seen but we can realize only the beauty of sculptures not history. For this sir John Marshall writes "to know Indian art in India alone is to know half story". In the sculptures of Kudal Sangam sursundaris are most important icons in Hindu religion. Generally sursundaries are carved on the outer wall of the temples but here they are inside of swargamandapa. Sursundaries means Apsaras. The Apsaras or Sursundaries have been a source of inspiration for lovers of Art ever. Since they adorned the walls of the temples⁸

Like this we can realize the beauty of Kudal sangam but lesser known about its history.

CONCLUSION -

1. Kudal Sangam is a chief centre of Art and Architecture in Solapur district.
2. Fusion of Shaivism and Vaishnavism is seen here.
3. The temple is oldest in Maharashtra means built up in 1018 A.D.
4. Basalt stones were used to create this temple.
5. Swargamandap is one of the important characteristics of this temple. We can see swargamandap at Khidrapur also.
6. This is the branch of knowledge and iconography.
7. There was political stability and economic prosperity in Solapur district in that period.
8. Though the temple is in Maharashtra Shiva is the main God of this temple.

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