



## Archaeological Explorations and Excavations in Western Orissa

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The explorations of archaeological sites of the western part of Orissa was taken up by the Britishers soon after the Archaeological Survey of India was established with Major General Alexander Cunningham as its first Director General. His assistant Mr. Joseph D. Beglar surveyed the Upper Mahanadi Valley (both Orissa and Chhattisgarh regions) and could locate places like Rajapadar (Belkhandi) in Kalahandi district, Ranipur Jharial and Titilagarh in Balangir district, Narsinghnath in Bargarh district and Baud town having archaeological remains and early temples as well as temple ruins. He undertook an extensive tour of this area in 1874-76 and has left a graphic account of what he discovered in these places, which is published in Volume-XIII of the Archaeological Survey of India Report in 1882. Beglar's Report on Narsinghnath has been quoted in the Sambalpur District Gazetteer (1932) by Mr. F.C. King in pages 248-250. Mr. King has reproduced another Report of the Archeological Survey of India for 1904-05 on Narsinghnath by noted Orientalist and historian Mr. G.R. Bhandarkar.

From a writing of Sir Walter Elliot, K.C.S.I. titled "Notice of a Remarkable Hypaethral Temple in the Hill Tracts of Orissa, with remarks on the Identification of Ancient Sites" published in pp.19-21 of the Journal of Oriental Research, i.e.

the Indian Antiquary (edited by Jas Burgess, M.R.A.S., F.R.G.C.) in 1878, it is known that in a personal correspondence with his friend Colonel John Campbell, Agent for the Suppression of Human Sacrifices and Female Infanticide in Orissa, he came to know about the discovery of an open circular temple or enclosure with statues of goddesses in niches by Col. Campbell during his annual tour on 28th January 1853. Col. Campbell (later on became Major General) saw about 120 temples and a large temple of bricks also.

The report of Major General John Campbell was published by the reputed publisher Horst and Blackett of London in 1864 with the title, "A Personal Narrative of Thirteen Years of Service Amongst the Wild Tribes of Khondistan for the Suppression of Human Sacrifices." In this Report he has mentioned about the existence of 120 Pagodas (temples), some writing in the Devanagari character on the largest temple, about the circular temple with sixty figures of goddesses in niches and the raised platform in the center of the circle.

The 120 temples, the circular temple or enclosure and the brick temple reported by Col. Campbell certainly mean the stone temples, the Chausath Yogini temple and the Indralath brick temple at Ranipur Jharial in the present Balangir



district. This discovery of Major General Campbell is the earliest of its kind, as it occurred in 1853.

Mr. Joseph D. Beglar has reported about the stone temples at Ghudar, Sihini, Udeypur and Kumda also and rightly "ascribed them to the same period as the Saivic remains at Ranipur Jharial."

Mr.P.C.Rath, the-then Superintendent of Archaeology, Patna State discovered another stone temple of the similar nature at Sirekela, situated at a distance of around 7 kms to the east of Udeypur village in July, 1940. Mr.Rath has published his report through an article, titled "Udayapur" in the Vol.V,No.1 of the Journal of the Kalinga Historical Research Society in June 1946.

The Kalinga Historical Research Society started functioning from 13th October, 1945 with Shri Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, the Maharaja and Ruler of Patna State as the provisional controlling authority and later on Pratap Keshari Deo, Maharaja and Ruler of Kalahandi State took over as controlling authority of this research society on 7.11.1945, but Mr.P.C.Rath remained as the Organising Secretary. However, the journal of this society was published uptill December, 1947 by the joint editorship of Mr.P.C.Rath and Mr.K.N.Mahapatra, Superintendent of Archaeology, Kalahandi State.

Following the foot-steps of Mayurbhanj State, Archaeology Department was created in Kalahandi State in 1943, with Mr. K.N. Mahapatra as the State Archaeologist. Through survey of ancient monuments of the State conducted by the State Archaeologist many temple ruins were discovered at Amath Ghat, Belkhandi, Narla, Asurgarh, Madanpur

Rampur, Mohangiri, Sankush, Deypur (Kalampur) and Topigaon (Biswanathpur).

Excavation was conducted by Mr.Mahapatra at Belkhandi from May, 1946 onwards. In the first fortnight of this excavation itself, the remains of a temple belonging to Sapta Matrkas and a Mandapa as well as statues of the Sapta Matrkas, Uma Mahesvara, Laksmi Narayana, Ganesa, Mahisamardini Durga, Tapasvini Parvati, Nayikas, Maithuna, Yogis, Dvarapalas, Naga pillars, Gajasimha etc. were discovered from underneath the earth. Two inscriptions carved on blocks of white sandstones, old earthen lamps of different shapes and earthen vessels were also discovered during excavations. It is the first excavation conducted in western part Orissa during the pre-independence period.

It is known from the writings of noted epigraphist and historian Pandit Satyanarayan Rajaguru that he visited Mohangiri in the district of Kalahandi in 1948 and deciphered the two-lined inscription found on a stone pillar inside the Siva temple at Mohangiri. (Inscription of Orissa, Bhubaneswar, 1958, p. 105-106, p. 154). He has also mentioned about Belkhandi and Amathgad in an article published in the J.K.H.R.S., Vol. 1, No.3, pp.266-268.

In the neighbouring State of Patna (Balangir) also archaeological sites like Saintala, Sauntpur, Salebhata and Patnagarh were thoroughly surveyed by the State Superintendent of Archaeology Mr.P.C. Rath in 1946-47. Learned scholar Mr. P.C.Rath wrote in detail about the temple ruins and loose sculptures at Saintala in an article titled "Saintala ( Ruins of a town on fiver Sungad, A Tributary of Tel)" and published it in the J.K.H.R.S., Vol II, No.2&3, September issue of 1947, along-with photoes of four sculptures, doorjmb, the central figure of



Visnu and two other Visnu images having depiction of Dasavatara in both sides in Plates 9, 10, 11 and 12. In the same issue of J.K.H.R.S. photos of sculptures of the Kosalesvara temple at Patnagarh like the images of Ardhanarisvara, Varuna, Female with Parrot and panel on Jagamohana doorway depicting Uma Mahesvara were published in Plates 13, 14, 15 and 17. The rock-cut Varaha figure at Ranipur Jharial and the Tribikrama image of Sauntpur (in situ) were also brought to limelight through Plates Nos. 21 and 22.

An Archaeological Museum was also set up by the Maharaja of Patna State (Bolangir-Patna) at Bolangir, where sculptures like the Female looking out of a window from Ranipur Jharial, images of Viranchi Narayana from Salebhata, Nararaja and Bhairava images from Sauntpur were housed, being collected from those sites. An excellent standing image of Surya was also collected from the temple ruins of Sauntpur, which was focussed through the photo published in the facing page of page - 247 of J.K.H.R.S. Vol.I, No.3, December 1946. This image was preserved in the Archaeological Museum of Patna State at Bolangir and subsequently was shifted to the Sambalpur University Museum at Burla in Sambalpur district by Dr. N.K. Sahu, the-then Professor and Head of the Department of History.

Even during his visit in April, 1947 to some villages of Sonepur State on private work, Mr. P.C. Rath could discover an archaeological site called Asurgad in between Kumarsingha and Nuagad villages, situated at a distance of around 15 kms to the north-west of Sonepur town on the northern bank of river Mahanadi. He collected potteries of various shapes and published an article on the site in the J.K.H.R.S., March 1947 issue. While dealing on the antiquities of Balangir Patna State, Cobden Ramsay the-then Political Agent of the Feadatory States writes "an ancient

temple dedicated to Biranchi Narayan Devata, the sun god is at Salebhata. Images dug up on the spot establish the nature of the worship originally practiced there, and the form of the images, as well as the design of the temple, tally precisely with those found in the temple at Baidyanath in the Sonepur State." As about historical sites of Sonepur State he further writes "Relics of an older civilisation like temples, images, ornaments, gold coins, old fashioned wells and inscriptions found at Sonepur town speaks of its ancient heritage." Mr. Ramsay has also written about the Suvarnameru Siva temple of Sonepur town in his book, titled "Feudatory States of Orissa", the 1st edition of which was published in 1910.

As mentioned earlier, Mr. Joseph D. Beglar passed through Baud in 1875-76. He has given a short account of the antiquities of Baud town like the Ramesvara group of single-celled temples, numbering three. Mr. Beglar has assigned ninth century as time of construction of these temples and called them "gems of arts, and are very close in date to the oldest group of temples around the Lingaraj shrine at Bhuvanesvara. (Cunningham-Archaeological Survey Report, Vol.XIII, pp. 118-19, PL.XVIII).

The noted historian Mr. Rakhal Das Banerji visited Baud along with two Post Graduate students of Benares Hindu University in the first week of March, 1929. He has recorded in details about the antiquities of Baud State like three temples of the Ramesvara group, the Buddhist images of Mahattari Tara, Lokesvara and the colossal image of Buddha in the Bhumisparsa Mudra. He also discovered the twin temples at Gandharadi, two temples at Bausuni and the early historic site at Asuragad. Mr. Banerji has given graphic account of these discoveries in the Journal of Bihar Orissa Research Society, Vol.XV, pp.65-82, published in 1929.



In 1875-76, Sonapur was also visited by Joseph D. Beglar who reports "Sonapur contains numerous temples, but I saw nothing which I could pitch upon as a relic of ancient architecture." (Archaeological Survey Report, Vol, XIII, p.120).

The earliest reference to the Kosalesvara temple at Baidyanath has occurred in the 'List of Antiquarian Remains in the Central Provinces and Berar, Calcutta, 1897, New Imperial Series, No.19' by Henry Cousens.

Mr. B. C. Mazumdar was a lawyer at Sambalpur. In the later period he served as a Lecturer in the Post Graduate Department of Arts in the Calcutta University and also became a Vakil of the Calcutta High Court. His first work titled "Sonapur in the Sambalpur Tract" was published in 1911. His second book on history of western Orissa is titled "Orissa in the Making" which was published in 1925.

In both books Mr. B.C.Mazumdar has mentioned about the Kosalesvara temple at Baidyanath in the-then Feudatory State of Sonapur. While discussing about the "Varman Rajas" ( the Telugu Choda kings of Suvarnapura) he has mentioned in his historical note on "Champamalla Plates of Jogesvara Deva Varman, son of Somesvara Deva Varman of the Solar Race" - "Jogesvara Varman mentions specifically the god Baidyanath to whom he was devoted. It is also highly probable that the temple of Birinchi Narayan in the Patna State, which is of the pattern of the temple at Baidyanath, was built by the Varmans. It is to be noted that though the village, in which the temple is, retains the old name Baidyanath, the presiding deity of the temple is now called Kosalesvara or the lord of Kosala country. (Sonapur in the Sambalpur Tract, Pub.-A.C. Sarkar, Calcutta, 1911), Mr. B.C.Mazumdar has further recorded his observation as follows: " The temple of

Kosalesvara on the Tel River in Sonapur State bears on the arch of the gateway a very beautiful representation of Matangi Maha-Laksmi, and this representation is strikingly similar to what we meet with on the seals of the early Kosala Guptas." (Orissa in the Making by B.C. Mazumdar, 1925, p.182).

Casual reference to this temple has been made in "Orissa : Past and Present," Cuttack, 1962, p.49 by Debala Mitra and "Studies in Orissan History' Archaeology and Archives, Cuttack, 1969", by P. Archarya. Detailed description of the Kosalesvara temple has been done by Prof. D.R.Das in a research article, titled 'Kosalesvara Temple at Baidyanath (Balangir District, Orissa)', *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXXVIII, No.4, New York, 1976. pp.297-306. A book titled "Temples of Orissa : The study of A Sub-style" was authored by Dr.D.R. Das, a former Professor in the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture of the University of Calcutta and published by Agam Kala Prakashan, Delhi in 1982, in which he has vividly written about the architectural features of four major temples of the upper Mahanadi valley, namely the Kosalesvara Temple at Baidyanath, the Kapilesvara Temple at Charda, The Somesvara Temple at Ranipur Jharial and the Narasimhanatha Temple near Paikmal. ( pp.15-33 ff.). In another Monograph titled 'Stellate Temples of Orissa' authored by Dr. Das and published in "Art and Culture, No.1, July 1983," he has vividly dealt with the stellate temples of the Remesvara Group, namely Bhubanesvara, Svapnesvara and Pascima Somanatha at Baudh, the Patalesvara temple at Budhikomna made of bricks, and the ruined brick temple at Kansil near Ranipur Jharial. Dr. D.R.Das is an avid scholar who visited the upper Mahanadi valley in western Orissa several times and studied the architectural features of fifty-two temples at Ranipur Jharial, out of which one is hypaethral,



three are Khakhara, five are bhadra and forty-three are rekha deulas. His study on the fifty-two temple at Ranipur Jharial has been published by the Centre of Advanced Study in Ancient History and Culture, Calcutta University in 1990 in a book titled "Temples of Ranipur Jharial" in which he has discussed vividly about the architectural features of all those temples, their ground plans and elevation plans.

It is very strange that Kapilesvara temple at Charda, which has the architectural feature of the 10th century A.D. was not reported till 1968, when it was focussed for the first time in the Balangir District Gazetteer to have been built by the Ganga king Ananga Bhima Deva II (1211-1238 A.D.) who wrested western Orissa from the Kalachuris of Ratnapur (Ratanpur is now in Bilaspur District of Chhattishgarh State). Orissa District Gazetteers, Balangir, State Editor; Dr. Nabin Kumar Sahu, Orissa Government Press, Cuttack, 1968, P. 481). Most probably, getting this information from the District Gazetteer, in January 1974 Dr. D.R. Das of the University of Calcutta visited this temple and has written a few lines in his article titled 'Kosalesvara Temple at Baidyanath', published in *Artibus Asia*, New York, Vol. XXXVIII, 4, 1976, p.307. He has mentioned - "The temple consists of a deul and a mandapa. In plan and disposition the mandap is identical with that found at Baidyanath. The balconied windows at the sides have gone but the plinth with the base mouldings is preserved. As a result of mindless restoration the interior was given a mosaic floor, the pillars several layers of multicoloured paint, the sculptures a cement wash and the entire construction a thick coating of plaster. But originally the roof of the mandapa seems to have been flat, and though the mandapa has a Central Indian character, the deul is typically Orissan." Art historian Madam Dr. Vidya Dehejia

for the first time pointed out the similarity between the Mukhasalas of Vaidyanath and Charda temple having a raised platform with highly decorated pillars, and has taken those to be a local and regional variation on the plan of the square Mukhasala. (p.38). She has talked of this highly decorated pillar of the Mukhasala of Vaidyanath and Charda pillars. "The interior pillars of the Orissan temples are treated in a utilitarian manner. The shafts are a plain that occasionally became octagonal in the centre, and capitals consist of a square abacus with a roll below it..... the only examples of highly decorated pillars are in the Mukhasalas of the Kosalesvara and Charda temples. The pillar, a square shaft arising from an overflowing purnaghata, becomes octagonal, with alternate facets decorated with kirtimukhas holding pearl strings caught up by roaring lions. The abacus block is also decorated with kirtimukhas." Mm. Dehejia has described the important sculptures of both these temples and also about the Pancharatha plan of the exterior elevation of the temple at Charda in pages 136-137 of her book titled 'Early Stone Temples of Orissa', which was published in 1979 by Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi. This book is the outcome of a research project to study the temples and sculptures of Orissa, which she undertook in 1973 after receiving a Homi Bhabha fellowship.

The famous art historian Mr. Charles Louis Fabri during exploration in 1961 found two images of Buddha at Ganiapalli situated at a distance of 8 kms from Melchhamunda village in the Bargarh subdivision of Sambalpur district (present Bargarh district). He also discovered the plinth portion of a brick-built temple at Mahadevpali (now in Jharsuguda district), a village situated at a distance of 36 miles (around 60 kms) from Sambalpur town, which is dated by him to the early 8th century AD. (P.36-37) Mr. Fabri has



vividly described about the Jagamohana pillars of Narsinghnath temple near Paikmal and has assigned them the date, 600-650 A.D. or the 7th century A.D. But he has taken the Pasvadevatas of this temple to be of the 11th century A.D. He has pointed out that the entire temple and its sculptural art belong to the 11th century A.D. (pp.37-39) Fabri also visited the Kosalesvara temple at Baidyanath in the Bolangir district (now it is in Sonapur district), situated at a distance of about 9 kms from Sonapur town. He has described about the brick-built mukhasala of this temple and from the study of the sculptures like Lady Looking at the Mirror, the Mother and Child, the Loving Couple, has dated them to the 7th century A.D. and the Karttikeya image fitted on the right doorjamb of the entrance to the Mukhasala to the 6th century A.D. due to the strange treatment of the bird (Mayura, the Vehicle of Karttikeya) and the wig-type head-dress on his head. (pp. 41-43) Mr. Fabri has vividly discussed about the Sixty-four Yogini images at Ranipur Jharial in his book (pp.95-100) He has dated them "somewhere around 1000 A.D." Fabri has studied the twin temple at Gandharadi in Phulbani district ( now Baudh district ) and dated both these temples to 750 A.D. or earlier. (p.113-115, pp. 137-139) and Plate-C VIII. Although Mr. Fabri during his exploratory tour visited Baudh town and saw the Buddha image in front of the royal palace and the triple temples of the Ramesvara Group, he has not written much about them. (p.73) He has dated the temples to the 8th century A.D. (Plate-CVI). For the first time, Mr. Fabri has pointed out about the Dravidian style, barrel-vault roofed miniature temple near the left side of the doorway to the 64-Yogini temple. Mr. Fabri visited Patnagarh also during his exploration. He has taken the pillars now fitted to the Nandi Mandapa to be of the 8th century A.D. or a little earlier and the Jagamohana pillars of the

Kosalesvara temple to the 12th century A.D. The same dating is ascribed to the images, now fitted to the walls of the Jagamohana (p.70 and Plates LV & LVI). But he thinks all these to be ancient Buddhist pillars. The Indralath brick temple at Ranipur Jharial with stone revetted entrance has been dated to the 10th century A.D. by Fabri (Plates CL IX & CLX). He also visited the Chandi temple ruins at Saintala and has dated the beautifully carved doorjamb to be of the 11th century A.D. (Plate CL VII ).

From the Prefatory Note of Mr. Ashok Mathur, the brother-in-law of Mr. Fabri, written in July 1974 at New Delhi and printed in the book of Mr. Fabri, titled ' History of the Art of Orissa' ( Published by Orient Longman Ltd., New Delhi in 1974), it is known that Mr. Fabri started the project almost two decades prior to the publication of the book some time in 1954 and the work was completed in 1965. This book is the second posthumous work of the author. Mr. Mathur has mentioned in this Note about one of the letters of Mr. Fabri, in which he wrote to Mr Mathur that it was going to be one of the major works of his life. But unfortunately, before the publication of this book Mr. Fabri died in 1968, when the formal arrangements for its publication was under way.

The collapsed Siva temple at Mohangiri in the extreme north-east corner of the present Kalahandi district bordering the Kandhamal district was brought to lime light by the noted historian late K.N. Mohapatra in December, 1946 through an article titled "History of the Kalahandi State Before the Ganga Power", published in the Journal of the Kalinga Historical Research Society (JKHRS), Vol. I, No.3, December, 1946, P.268. In the language of Mr. Mahapatra, " standing not very far from the famous Kaling ghat is a noteworthy monument of this area.



It belongs to the Parasurameswar type of temple at Bhubaneswar and is similar to the twin temple at Gandharadi of Boudh State on the bank of the Mahanadi. The place Mohangiri seems to have strategic importance in those days of yore, as it was situated on the highway passing from Kalinga ( Ganjam side) to Kosala (Kalahandi - Patna side) and this temple was erected to serve the purpose of a guide as well as a place of worship to the travelers passing on this way. Hiuen-Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, followed this route while making his journey from Kalinga to Kosala (Patna-Sambalpur tract) in the middle of the 7th century. This temple may safely be regarded as a work of the Somavamsi kings ruling over this area as this can be assigned to the eighth or ninth century of the Christian Era."

As mentioned earlier Dr. Satya Narayan Rajaguru, the eminent epigraphist visited the temple ruins at Mohangiri on 2nd April, 1947. He discovered two short inscriptions belonging to the 5th-7th century A.D. and some tantric diagrams or yantras incised on the floor of the mukhasala of this temple.

The next scholar who visited this Siva temple at Mohangiri is Vidya Dehejia, who has mentioned in her book, - "On the edge of a large tank near the Khadga river in interior Tosala is the completely renovated Siva temple at Mohangiri. Fortunately the original pillars of the flat roofed mukhasala have been preserved and placed inside the newly built hall, and we find eight pillars and four pilasters as well as the beams that once rested above them. The lower half of the column is a plain square, while the upper portion is embellished with a large ghata with leaves overflowing at its four corners and with several round and many-sided mouldings below this. Blocks of stone from the original temple are lying around and fragments of decorative carving may be seen on them. Bands

of scroll-work as well as purnaghata reliefs are discernible. On the basis of the meagre evidence available, we would tentatively assign the temple to Formative Phase B." ( Early Stone Temples of Orissa, p.122-123).

A journal titled 'New Aspects of History of Orissa' (N.A.H.O.) commenced its publication under the editorship of the famous historian Dr. N.K. Sahu from 1971 as a souvenir published on the occasion of the Fourth Annual Convention of the Sambalpur University. Through articles published in this Journal, the lion-lioness, five hero stones and one four-handed Ganesa figures were focussed by Dr. Sadhu Charan Panda (N.A.H.O., pp.49-52). The title of his article is "Antiquities of Maraguda Valley Preserved in the University Museum." In another article titled "The Ganapati Icons," Dr. Prafulla Kumar Nayak ( N.A.H.O., pp. 31-35) has described the iconographic features of nine Ganesa images, one each collected from Bolangir, Gaisilet, Maraguda Velley, Gunpur, Sambalpur, Bamrargarh, Belkhandi and two from Barpali, their dates ranging from 11th to 18th century A.D. Yet in another article, titled 'The Durga Icons' (N.A.H.O., II, 1978, pp.1-4) Dr. P.K. Mishra has described the iconographic features of one six-handed Durga image from Belkhandi belonging to the 8th-9th century A.D. and one twenty-handed Durga image from Salebhata, both in the Sambalpur University Museum.

After the merger of the feudetary states of Orissa to the State of Orissa in December, 1947 exploration and excavation in the western region of Orissa didnot occur till again it gained momentum in around 1968, when the noted historian Dr. Nabin Kumar Sahu reported about many temple sites like Charda and Champamal, as well as places of archeological importance like Dharapgarh, Binka and Kotsamlei etc. as the



State Editor in the Balangir District Gazetteer which was published in 1968. The Sambalpur University started functioning from 1st January, 1967 and its Department of History from 1969. Prof. Dr. N.K.Sahu joined as the first Head of the Department and under his able supervision excavations were conducted at Asurgad (Narla) in Kalahandi district in 1973, Ganiapali in Bargarh district in 1978, and Manamunda in Baud district in 1981. Further excavations were conducted in Manamunda-Asurgad in Baud district in 1990-91 and Nrusinghnath in Bargarh district in 1991.

The State Archaeology also conducted excavations in some of the mounds at Ranipur Jharial site in Balangir district in 1975-76. During this excavation a Buddha image was discovered in a brick mound. Mr. P.K.Ray, the Superintendent of Archaeology conducted this excavation.

Late Mr.P.K.Deo, the former Ruler (Maharaja) of the erst-while Feudatory State of Kalahandi was a great explorer and historian. He took keen interest in exploring the archaeological sites of the Maraguda Valley in present Nuapada district and published his exploration report in the Orissa Historical Research Journal in Volume-XVI in 1973. For two days, on 12th & 13th January, 1969, P.K.Deo visited the ruins of forts called Chheliagarh, Jumlagarh and Maraguda and other ruins in Sunabeda plateau like Garbhata. During this exploratory tour, he could discover an image of Kankalen (Chamunda) at Chheliagarh, two stone lions at Manikgarh, images of Ganesa, Jaina Tirthankara, elephant panel, dancing scene, lady in penance, Naga (Yogi Sundara) in the Maraguda valley and many other objects of historical importance. ( P.K. Deo, 'Forgotten Forts in Kalahandi District. Jumlagarh-Maraguda Complex, Part-II; The Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol. XVI, No.3, P.1-

7). For the first time excavations were conducted by the State Archaeology under the guidance of Mr.P.K.Ray, the Superintendent in three mounds of Maraguda valley. The huge brick citadel of Rani Mahal (Queen's Palace) was unearthed during excavation, which is assigned to the 9th-10th century A.D. by Mr. Ray. The structural remains of a collapsed Siva temple along with a beautiful Karttikeya image (20"X10") made of red sand stone was discovered in the second mound. In the third mound, situated at a distance of 100 metres from the second mound, the ruins of another temple was discovered. The remains of the temples and antiquities discovered in the second and third mounds are assigned to the period of 11th-13th century A.D. by the excavator.

Further excavations were conducted by late Prof.N.K.Sahu in 1982-83, when after his retirement as the Vice-Chancellor of the Sambalpur University he was functioning as the Adviser in Archaeology to the Government of Orissa. Prof. Sahu brought to light a brick-built temple of the 5th century A.D., having a four-handed Durga image with an inscription in the box-headed Brahmi scripts. He also discovered a Saiva monastery having four residential rooms with dormitory in the second tier and five residential rooms in the third tier of the Trisul mound. Hundreds of mounds and ruined monuments mostly made of burnt bricks could be discovered, excavated and documented in June, 1991 by Dr. C.B. Patel, the Project Director of the Maraguda Excavation Project in a 20 km radius area.

Mr. J.P. Singh Deo of Khariar in the old Kalahandi district (now in the newly formed Nuapada district) is an explorer, who is taking keen interest during the last thirty five years in discovering new historical sites in his native





district. He has brought to light the ruined brick temple of Siva on the left bank of Indra river near Rajna village, temple ruins at Bhulia Sikuan; brick temple at Komna, Siva temple on the embankment of Tirbandh tank of Khariar through his research article titled 'Temples of Nawapara Sub-division,' published in the Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol.XXXIV, Nos. 172, 1968, page - 21. He has also focussed about the ruins of a fallen temple structure at Dharnimal village on the left bank of Udanti river in Nuapada district through another article, titled Historical sites of Khariar published in the "New Dimensions of Tourism in Orissa" Madam Rajashree Devi, wife of Mr. Singdeo is also taking keen interest and she has discovered temple ruins at Dumerbahal site on the right bank of Udanti River (*Khadial-ra-Itihasa*, Pub: Kalinga Students Store, Cuttack, 1983, p.94).

Patalesvara brick temple at Budhikomna (now in Nuapada district) has been conserved by the State Archaeological Department of Government of Orissa, which find mention in the list of twentyfour protected monuments conserved by 1976, and is dated to circa 9th century A.D. as its construction period. (P.K. Ray, Achievements in the Field of Archaeology, Orissa Review, Vol.XXXIII, No.1, Independence Day Special Issue, August, 1976, Bhubaneswar, pp.37.).

This temple was focussed by Mr. J.P. Singh Deo in his article titled 'Historical Sites of Khariar' published in the 'New Dimensions of Tourism in Orissa' Page-41. The architectural feature of the brick temple of Budhikomna has been described for the first time in detail in his article, titled, 'The Unique Brick Temple at Budhikomna' by Mr. B.K. Rath in the souvenir 'New Dimensions of Tourism in Orissa', edited by Mr. A.N. Tiwari, published by the Department of Tourism and

Cultural Affairs, Government of Orissa and released on 20.8.1976 by the-then Chief Minister of Orissa Mrs. Nandini Satpathy at Pantha Nivas, Sambalpur.

Mr. J.P. Singh Deo has just mentioned about this temple in one line only 'Triratha Brick Temple at Budhikomna' in his article titled 'Historical Sites of Khariar'. But through another article titled, 'The Unique Brick Temple at Budhikomna', Mr.B.K. Rath has elaborately dealt with the elevation plan, architectural and sculptural details of the temple (pp.55-58). It is strange that Mr. Rath could not mark the five-lined inscription on the doorjamb of the garbhagrha of this temple. This inscription was discovered by Mr.P.K.Roy, who has mentioned about it in an article published by him in the Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol.XXIII, Nos. 1-4, 1978, pp. 89-92 in which he has dealt with the architectural features of the Indralath Brick Temple of Ranipur Jhariar. While discussing about the architectural features of the seventy-five feet high Indralath temple, Mr. Ray has mentioned about five lines of mutilated inscription engraved on the lower portion of the Jagamohana of Patalesvara temple at Budhikomna. (page-91)

Dr. Thomas E. Donaldson, who is presently Professor of Art at Cleveland State University, U.S.A. is engaged in research since last forty years on the temple art of Orissa. He did his Ph.D. on the "Sculptural Decorations on Orissan Temples" under the supervision of Prof. Sherman Lee at Case Western University in 1973. In the 'Preface' of the Volume-I of his monumental work 'Hindu Temple Art of Orissa', which was published by E.J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands in 1985, Prof. Donaldson has mentioned that it is the outcome of his fifteen years of research and seven trips to Orissa from the United States of America. Although he has dealt with forty temples



and many minor temple sites having loose sculptures of archaeological importance, he has dealt with eight temples of western Orissa, situated at Ranipur Jharial, Patnagarh, Baidyanath, Charda, Budhikomna, Gandharadi and Baudh. He has also studied the sculptural art pieces of minor temple sites at Narsinghnath, Saintala, Sonepur and Belkhandi. This happened due to the fact that he has visited only those sites about which he got information from earlier published research articles in various journals. His work has been published in three volumes, volume-II & III being published in 1987 by the same publisher, E.J. Brill. All the three volumes contain 1137 pages of text and 1481 photographic plates. This is perhaps the strongest documentation of most of the sculptures of Orissa and extensive coverage of the early temple sites of Orissa.

But as the early temples and temple ruins of the western part of Orissa are utterly neglected in this work, this researcher who started exploration in April, 1984, decided in 1985 after going through the Vol.I of Prof. Donaldson's work, to thoroughly survey the early temples and temple ruins of Western Orissa, belonging to the period from 5th-6th century A.D. to the 14th century A.D. (almost 1000 years). The outcome of this research is quite encouraging. Many hitherto unknown and unreported temple sites like the Panchayatana Temple Complex of Daspur Surda, the Kusangei Temple of Kusang, the small triratha temples (two at Gandharla and one at Badpada) all in the Balangir district, and one triratha temple at Belsaragad (Sundargarh District) were brought to lime light by this scholar. Temples of Daspur Surda and Kusang were discovered by this writer in July, 1984, and three small stone temples of Gandharla and Badpada were located in 1989. These discoveries have added to our knowledge to the temple art and architecture of the upper Mahanadi Valley. The details of the architecture

of the Kosalesvara temple of Daspur Surda and the Kusangei temple of Kusang has been published in the esteemed journal '*Orissa Review*' in the Volume - XLIII, No.3, October 1986 and Volume - XLVI, No.11, June 1990 issues in the form of research articles. The triratha style single-called stone temples of Gandharla and Badpada have been reported through an article titled, "Some Archaeological Remains of Balangir District" published in the Orissa Historical Research Journal, Volume-L, Nos.1-4, 1995. Yet another dilapidated temple of the triratha order, situated at Bijepur having an eight-armed Mahisasuramardini Durga image in the broken state, being worshipped as Chandi inside the broken sanctum was located in July, 1989 by the Curator of State Archaeology, Dr. B.K.Rath which he has mentioned in his exploration report through an article, titled, "Recent Archaeological Exploration in Orissa", published in the "Orissa History Congress Proceeding of the XV Annual Session, 4th-5th November, 1989, page-45. Exploration in the Upper Mahanadi Valley by this researcher in between April, 1984 and 1993 in the first phase for ten years and in between July, 1998 and December 2000 in the second phase for two years and a half, as many as forty-two sites having temple ruins dating to the period from the 5th-6th to the 14th-15th century A.D. could be located and iconographic features of more than one thousand images of the Hindu Pantheon have been published by this researcher through fifty-six research articles, which add to the knowledge of the temple architecture and sculptural art of the Upper Mahanadi Valley.

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