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SAIVITE ANTIQUITIES OF KAUPUR, BHADRAK

Dr. Uday Ranjan Das

The village Kaupur is located about 12 kilometre to the north-west of the District Head Quarters of Bhadrak. The river Salandi flows throughout the village and it has played a very significant role in making this village agriculturally and culturally prosperous. The village yields various sculptures belonging to Brahmanical and Buddhist pantheon which are very significant from the point of archaeology. Mention may be made the village possesses as much as six Siva Temples in ruined condition, numerous Siva *lingams* and Saivite images like, Uma-Mahesvar, Gangadhara Siva, Ekapada Bhairav, Ganesha, Kartikeya, Parvati and numerous Brushava images (vahan of Lord Shiva). The numerous Saivite antiquities of the village indicate the wide spread of Saivism in this place since early period. Here attempt has been made to provide a detail description of Saivite antiquities found at the village Kaupur which are noticed by the present author during archaeological survey of this village.

Bankesvara Mahadev Temple:

The temple of Bankesvara Mahadeva is situated in the village of Kaupur. It is a single temple of *pidhad* design and measuring about 20 feet in height. The presiding deity is a Siva *linga* named Bankesvara Mahadev (Fig-1) looks like natural in character. It might have after the collapse of the original temple the present temple is constructed, which may be dateble to 18th century A.D. The side deities of the original temple such as Ganesha, Karttikeya and Parvati are preserved inside the temple. The image of the Ganesha (Fig. 2) is seated in *sukhasana* on a lotus pedestal. It is measured about 2'x1'6" and made of chlorite stone. In his four hands he holds a snake in upper right hand and a rosary in lower right hand while his left upper hand hold an axe and lower left hand holds a pot of sweets. His hair is designed with *jatamukuta*. It may assignable to 8th century A.D. from its iconographical feature. A beautiful standing image of Kartikeya (Fig-3) has been worshipped inside the sanctum of the temple. It is measuring about 2'x1'2" and made of chlorite stone. The image is carved standing in *tribhang* pose and holds a cock in his left hand and an arrow in his right hand. The association of cock in the place of peacock indicates that it is an early period sculpture dateble to 7th-8th centuries. It is in good state of preservation. An image of Parvati is also worshipped inside the sanctum.

Uma-Mahesvara:

In the ViranchiNarayana Temple of the village two images of Sun God in the name ofViranchiNarayana are worshiped along with four Saivite images, such as three sets of Uma-Mahesvara images and an image of Ganesh.Of the three Uma-Mahesvar images,the first one (Fig.4) is in good state of preservation Siva is here seated in *lalitasana* with his right leg placed on the back of his vehicle Nandi, sculptured below. Siva is here four handed. In the upper right hand there is a *trisula* and the lower right hand is in *vyakyayana mudra*. Similarly with the left hand is embracing his consort Uma while with the lower one he touches her chin. Uma is seated here on the left side of Siva with her right foot placed on the back of her vehicle lion. She turns her face in a very graceful pose towards her Lord. Her left hand rests on the left knee and her right one is placed on the left thigh of Siva. Siva has matted crown on the head, and his body is decorated with usual ornaments. The heads of the god and goddess is surrounded by a round plain nimbus. The attitude of Siva and Uma is almost the same as in case of the Siva Parvati image carved in relief on the capital of a pillar of cave no. 1 of Badami.¹

The second image of **Uma-Mahesvara** (Fig-5) is much damaged. Faces of Siva and Uma are mutilated; all the hands of the god and goddess are partially damaged. They are seated on a double-petalled lotus pedestal. Uma's face is turned towards Siva and the attitude is expressive of her eagerness to hear something from her lord. Their right feet are placed on two lotuses below the seat and above their vehicles, the bull and lion. The frizzled locks of the hairs of Uma indicate that the sculpture belongs to a period about the close of post-Gupta period, about the 7th century A.D.²

In the third **Uma-Mahesvara** image belongs to the same period as above. Here Siva has a *kiritamukuta* on the head and his body is decorated with jewelledornaments. The upper right hand is broken, the lower one rests on the right thigh. With the upper left hand Siva is embracing his concert Uma while the lower one is playing a *Vina*.³Both the deities here are seated in the position of *lalitasana* facing towards each other. In between them there is *trishula*with a snake coiled around it. As usual there are the image of bull and lion carved in the bottom of the pedestal.

As mentioned earlier the tree images of Uma-Mahesvara are belonged to 7th-8th century A.D. During this period the inter relationship between Saivism and Saktism constitute two important religious movement in India.⁴ Lord Siva is the Supreme spirit in Saivismwhereas the followers of Sakti worshipped the mother goddess as the supreme being. The syncretistic tendencies in the field of religion of this land fostered the ideological union of Siva and Sakti. They are regarded as the primeval parents of this universe. Their combined form became known as Uma-Mahesvara and *Ardhanarisvara*.⁵The image of Ganesha is measuring about 2'x1'6" and

made of chlorite stone. He is seated in *sukhasana* pose on a double petalled lotus pedestal. His cognizance mark mouse is finely depicted on the central position of the pedestal. In his four hands he holds an axe in upper right hand and a rosary in lower right hand while a flower in his upper left and a plate of sweets in his lower left hand. It is in good state of preservation.

In another part of the village in a modern shrine named Chandi temple, just behind the village market three Saivite images are worshipped along with an eight handed Singhabahini Devi probably Uma and the other two are the standing figures of four-handed Siva. All the images are equal in dimension, measured about 3'x1'6" and made of black chlorite stone.

Gangadharamurty of Siva:

Two magnificent images of Siva are worshipped in the village shrine Chandi temple. The images are standing in *alidha* pose. (Fig.6 &7)) Of their four hands the upper right hand holds *akshamala* (rosary) the lower right hand shows *varadamudra* while the upper left one holds the a lock of the matted hair and the lower one holds an object which may be a pot. The deity is flanked by two figures. In the left side a standing figure of goddess Ganga with her mount crocodile is splendidly carved out and the right side a devotee in kneeling position with folded hands is observed. The difference between them is that while the left one has its mount bull at that time the right one has no such mark of cognizance. The head of both the images are decorated with matted hair. The curly hairs in several tiers are falling on the shoulders. Crescent moon is in his topknot and the stream of water spurting up like a geyser from his head. These two images identified with Gangadharamurti of Siva.⁶ Inside the shrine a Sivalinga also worshipped in the name of ChandesvaraMahadeva.

To the south of the shrine another Siva *linga* has been worshipped in a damaged brick temple which is fully damaged by a vast banyan trees. The *linga* is worshipped in the name of KadamesvarMahadev. It is a gigantic image of Siva lingam measuring about 1'6" in height 2' in circumference and made of black granite stone. Another *Sivalinga* is also worshipped in the name of KharakhiaMahadevon the debris of a temple made of laterite stone on the extreme bank of the river Salandi. The unique feature of the shrine is marked that the *yonipitha* is square size installed four feet higher than the surface in which the *linga* is crossed the *pitha* to two feet above and more than five feet below. The top portion of the *linga* above the *Saktipitha* is circular while the below portion from the *Saktipitha* is quadrangle in shape. The below portion is visible due to the removal of the foundation stones.

Besides these there is a number of Saiva temples known as BatesvaraHatakesvara, Baidesvar and others has been worshipped in different temples of the village, which indicates the wide prevalence of Saivism in this village.

EkapadaBhairava:

An image of *Ekapada* Bhairava (Fig.8) is worshipped under a tree near the BankesvarMahadeva temple. It is measuring about 1'6"X1' and made of chlorite stone, two hole marks of the slab indicate that it was originally fixed an early Siva temple.

Ekapadashiva is very rare in Indian Iconography, considering being a Lilamurty of Shiva and finding in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. In Odisha it is found in Chausath Yogini temples and very rarely found in some early Shiva temples, where he is more commonly known as AjaikapadaBhairava. But in Andhra Pradesh he is found in close association with Mother Goddess cult, specially with Chamunda.

In Odisha the iconography of Ekapada is quite different from South India. Though he has his characteristics one leg, matted hair and crescent moon headgear and ascetic attendants here Ekapada is never depicted with the torsos of Vishnu and Brahma. He may be four armed or two armed and is considered a form of Bhairava, the fearsome aspect of Shiva. He sports a short beard and moustache, an open mouth with fangs and bulging eyes with a wrathful expression. He is ithyphallic (with an erect phallus) and wears a tiger skin around his waist. He wears various ornaments and a long *yajnopivita* (sacred thread) across his chest. His ascetic attendants may hold *trishula* and sometimes he is accompanied by a female attendant and his *vahan* Nandi.⁷

Besides these a number of minor Shiva lingas and sculptural fragments related to Saivism lying scattered throughout the village and some are in the possession of some villagers. From the above mentioned findings it is clear that Saivism was spread in this region with wide popularity.

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PHOTOGRAPHS



Fig-1:
Lingam, Bankesvara Temple, Kaupur



Fig-2:
Ganesha, Bankesvara Temple, Kaupur

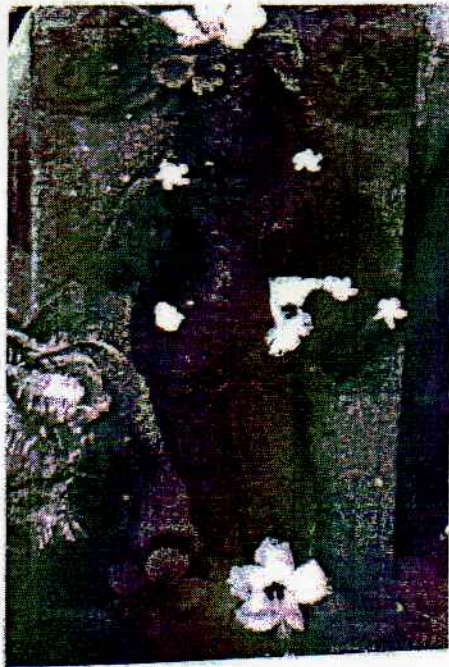


Fig-3:
Kartikeya, Bankesvara Temple, Kaupur



Fig-4:
Uma-Mahesvara, Kaupur



Fig-5:
Umamahesvara, Kaupur



Fig-6:
Gangadhara Siva, Kaupur



Fig-7:
Gangadhara Siva, Kaupur



Fig-8:
EkapadaBhairava, Kaupur