



KAILASH CAVE TEMPLE MYTH & REALITY: NEW LIGHT ON VISION OF ART & ARCHITECTURE

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ABSTRACT

Kailash cave temple included among wonders of the world. The unique character of Kailash lies in its highest glory of Hindu art. The Kailash temple is one of the largest rock-cut ancient Hindu temples located in Ellora, and it is a megalith carved out of one single rock. It was built in the 8th century by the Rashtrakuta king Krishana I. Kailash has been shrouded with mystery, beauty & glory.

KEYWORDS: Kailash temple , *Sahyadri* hills ranges , systematic conducted.



I. INTRODUCTION :

Of the 1200 rock-cut caves in India about 1000 are located in western India, more particularly in the state of Maharashtra. The region is dominated by the *Sahyadri* hills ranges, the basalt rock of which is ideal for carving.¹ Ellora is not exception to this. M.K.Dhavlikar has further observed that, the rock-cutting actively of Hindu starts form 6 century & the early cave temples are located in Mumbai at Jogeshwari& nearby island of Elephanta. Excavation work in Ellora began almost at the same time.²Some of the Buddhist caves began during this period. About the development of Hindu caves M.K.Dhavlikar has observed that, a most

noteworthy feature of Hindu cave temples is that they are richly adorned with exquisite sculptures of god & goodness on their walls. The rock-cut art reaches its zenith in Ellora cave 16 kailash a loftily monolithic temple carved in a huge block of stone isolated from the surrounding hill.³ Thus Kailas cave at Ellora has manifested climax in Hindu arts. The study of Kailas caves can be systematic conducted to understand myth & reality of Kailas caves.

The Ellora cave produces in the high tide of economic prosperity. It has been observed that, the exuberance of life that sprouts up from & spells on all sides is reflected in crowded bas-reliefs pillars & in the painting on the ceiling of the rock-cut caves.⁴ The

Kailas monolithic cave temple is the unique manifestation of glories tradition of the development of art & architecture in Western India.

In this paper the mythological stories of king Krishana& his queen Mankawati will be examine & new light will be thrown on the name Mankeshwar on the name of Shiva shrine.

II. THE GLORY OF KAILASH:

Kailas is symbol of glories Hindu tradition of art.Cave 16, also known as the Kailas temple is the unrivaled centerpiece of Ellora. This is designed to recall mount Kailas the abode of Lord Shiva – looks like a freestanding, multi-strayed temple complex, but it was carved out of one single

rock, and covers an area double the size of Parthenon in Athes.⁵ Initially the temple was covered with white plaster thus even more increasing the similarity to snow-covered Mount Kailash.⁶ It has been observed that, The so-called Kailas cave is a miracle of Indian rock cut architecture.⁷ There is a myth & reality behind this caves which can be explain here. The grant Kailas shrine is described in Rashtrakutas copperplate grant of the 8 century as compelling the admiration of even the celestials, who pause on their heavenly course to gaze at the beauty of so magnificent a monument & wonder how anyone could create so extraordinary a structure.⁸ Thus its show that lord Shiva has selected *Charnadri* hill to land his airplane on Kailas mountain. Further it has observed that, this stupendous monolithic temple was hewn from the top downward out of solid rock. The entire edifice the several pillared hall, the large court, the pyramidal tower & the *gopuras* was chiseled from one single rock.⁹ The monolithic structure of Kailas is its unique character.

III. THE FEATURES OF KAILASH ARTS:

1. There are continuities in themes & structures as well as presentation of Shiva miracles. Within the courtyard are three structures. As is traditional in Shiva temples, the first is a large image of the sacred bull Nandi in front of the central temple. According to M.K. Dhavlikar, architecturally & sculpturally, this is undoubtedly the finest cave temple in the world.¹⁰
2. A living rock bridge connects the Nandi Mandapa to the Shiva temple behind it. The temple itself is a tall pyramidal structure reminiscent of a south Indian Dravidian temple. The Viman style is important feature of kailash has given the site plan this style.¹¹
3. The shrine – complete with pillars, windows, inner and outer rooms, gathering halls, and an enormous lingam at its heart – carved from living stone, is carved with niches, pilasters, windows as well as images of deities, *mithunas* (erotic male and female figures) and other figures. The panel of kam&rati the best example of this type.¹²
4. Most of the deities at the left of the entrance are shaivaites while on the right hand side the deities are Vaishnavaites. The Ganga, Yamuna & Sarasvati images are well depicted on the form on of Kailas.¹² these rivers have become symbols of Indian culture.¹³
5. There are two *Dhvajastambhas* (pillars with the flagstaff) in the courtyard. Dhavajstabha is symbols of spiritual victory. *Dhavjastabhameans* flap poster of pillar.¹⁴
6. The grand sculpture of Ravana attempting to lift Mount Kailasa, the abode of Lord Shiva, with his full might is a landmark in Indian art. About Ravana M.K. Dhavlikar has describe it as dramatic figure.¹⁵
7. The construction of this cave was a feat of human genius – it entailed the removal of 200,000 tons of rock, and took 100 years to complete.¹⁶

IV. KAILASH MYTH & REALITY:

Kailas was carved in tune with natural surroundings. Thus study of Kailas caves can unfold myth & reality. According to a legend in the *Kathakalpataru* which has survived in medieval Marathi literature the queen of Rashtrakutta king Elu wanted to build a magnificent temple of Shiva & vowed that, she would not touch food until she show their final of the temple. The king invited architects from different region but they expressed their inability to accept the job. One architect Kokasa from Paithan, which is nearby, agreed to understand the task. He carved the finial in no time & the queen had to give up her fast. This was possible because in cave excavation, the work always start from the top & proceeds downwards. In Maharashtra, those who cannot enter a temple often protract we before the final over the spire from distance.¹⁷ Thus the myth & reality of kailash has been unfolded here.

V. SUMMARY:

The Shiva Linga at kailash as Mankeshwar which is named after queen Mankawati of Krishna I how is also Ela. The world mani is derived from Pali word mani which means screed. According to NarharKurundkar the kailash lingam is named after Buddhist tradition to attract Buddhist population toward Hindu religion. Thus myth & reality of Kailas is explained here.

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