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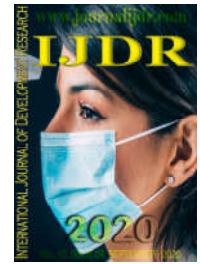
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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A STUDY OF SURYA SARVATOBHADRA IN KHAJURAHO MUSEUM

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ABSTRACT

The world famous Archaeological Museum of Khajuraho situated in Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh is fulfilled with numerous forms of antiquarian wealth. In it are placed numerous kinds of the sculptures related to The Sun god. The described Sarvato Bhadra sculptures are fulfilled with distinctive qualities both crosswise and lengthwise which are constructed all around the one stone slab only. There is difference in his asanas at some places they are standing and at some places are in meditative posture. These sculptures are generally constructed in small size. Sun has been incised on different stone slabs on the basis of art and Iconographic excellence accordingly. Some of which are depicted with Usha, pratiusha, pingala, dandi and attendants etc.

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INTRODUCTION

From time immortal Surya or sun god worshipped as is great energy provider as well as curative power to the living world. He is narrated in abstract and Figurative form in different stages/period i.e in Pre historic painting, Chalcolithic pottery and obviously in Historical antiquities. The iconographic features of Surya is vividly narrated in *Matsya Purana*, in which states that the image of sun god should be made as seated on a lotus with two hand holding two lotus flower.¹ The representation of Sun god in *sarvotobhadra* is very rare in Indian art. But at Khajuraho we have encounter with some *Surya sarvotobhadra*. Scholars like Devangana Desai interpret these iconographic edifices as *Rabi pitha*². In comparison to Orissan art depiction there is composite Figure but no Surya sarbotobhadra image in small form as noticed in Khajuraho iconographic representation. In Indian tradition the use of such Sarbotobhadra in different rituals which correlate with cosmic symbolism of *Mandala* or *Vyuha*³. H. Brunner described sarbotobhadra as per structural elements of *mandala* which represents a combination of the square grid seen in the *bhadra-mandalas* and a rounded lotus shape on a throne in the centre.

The lotus consist s of the pericarp (*Karnika*) , filaments (*Kesara*), Petals (*Patra, dala*) and the tips of the Petals (*dalagraha*). The throne has four feet (*Pada*) and four limbs or bodies (*gotra*) that is, side parts in the form of the bodies of men and animals.⁴

Discription

Sarbotobhadra means 'auspicious from all sides' and most likely refer to the symmetry of the *mandala* design. In literature it refers to *bandha* composition where as in architecture to denote a house with veranda all around and a type of temple. In town-planning the term refers to an oblong or square shaped town⁵. The four type *sarvotobhadra* explained in *Bhadramartanda* is versatile and having *bhadras* in application. It can be employed in all the religious observances (*vrata*), regardless of whether the principal deity is Vishnu, Siva or another deity. There are two types of *Suryabhadra* are described for use in *vratas* connected with the sun. Each one contains twelve images of the sun, twelve bearing the number that symbolizes the sun, since it corresponds to the twelve months of the year and the twelve zodiac signs. The two *bhadras* differ in the number of lines

draw and in the way the icons are placed⁶. One such source may have been the *Isanasivagurudeva-paddhati* by *Isanasivagurudevamisra*, an 11th -12th century *Saiva* manual of temple worshiped in four sections (*pada*). This text also describes different *mandalas* (circle) which include *Sarbotobhadra* type.⁷ However with view to the above basic discussion the five miniature image of Surya sarvotobhadra are analysis.

The antiquities details

The antiquity is measured as 49 x 49 x 69cm approximately and bearing accession number 1356. It is *tri-ratha* in plan and the *bhadra* projection has decorated with Surya images at four cordinal direction and top to it has decorated with two phase upraised lotus petal. In between the upraised petal decorated the outer circle; there is seated Figure of Aswani kumara's depicted with mace head type weapons. Just below to the lower series petal all four sides have decoration of different divinities and in respect to that one side decorated *Nabagraha* panel in which eight *Graha* has serially depicted but the Surya is absent because just below to the panel in the central projection recess has a standing Surya images. Aruna represent in small form between two legs of the main deity and either side flanked by Usha and Pratusha and attendant in side projections. In other side there is a reclining mother and child depicted with shampooing female attendant along few more attendants. This side is also Surya image depicted with attendants. The other side upper series of decoration are not identified where as god Surya represented as similar to the other *bhadra* projection (Fig.1).



Fig. 1. Standing Surya Sarvotobhadra, Navagraha, Acc No- 1356

Another Sarvotobhadra noticed is also *tri-ratha* in plan. It is measured as 50x50x 74 cm approximately and bearing the accession number 1351. It has three circle of lotus petal depicted in upper part of the edifices. The centre petals are upraised where as the outer two circle are represent inverted

type and separated through a circular band (Fig.2). Just below to the outer lotus petal decoration there is a *Karnika* design separated the flower fringe. Below to it and on *bhadra* projection has depicted surya image in seating position. He adorned with two lotuses in two upraised hands, there are three horses depicted below to the main deity and the small recess has separated with two pillar decoration. The side projection has depicted with eight door guardian in all direction. Base part of the edifice is plain temple type segment as *Bhita*, *Kumbha* and *Kapota*. At *bhita* there is *chaita* window motif carved in four cardinal directions (Fig.3).



Fig. 2. Mandala, Acc No-1351



Fig. 3. Tri-ratha, sarvotobhadra Surya with Dandi and Pingala, Acc No-1351

It is measured as 60x60x 120cm approximately and bearing the accession number 1206. It is also constituted under *tri-ratha* plans and more height comparative to other

Sarvotobhadra available in this series. Like other the top has decorated with four circles of lotus petal and having a circular top. Most of petals are decorated as inverted type and the last circle is damaged. The whole body of the *Sarvotobhadra* is divided and decorated in three segment Surya depiction so they counted twelve numbers which may represent the twelve month. Just below to the Lotus petal a *patti* decorated with *chaitya* window motif followed to diamond design is clearly noticed around the four faces. Further below there is decoration of standing images of Surya in small recess flanked by female deity aiming archer towards either side and they are identified with Usha and Pratusha. Similar type decoration also depicted on other three faces. Lower to the decoration another series of Surya images noticed in which the main deity Surya is depicted as standing position with all their attributes and flanked by Aswani Kumars. All three faces of the series also follow the similar decoration panel. Below to it there is segment of *Kapota* and *Karnika*. Further below there is a small recess on the central projection decorated with a small Figure of Surya (Fig.4). In totality there is twelve numbers of images of Surya represent the cycle of solar energy in month wise.



Fig. 4. Sarvotobhadra Surya, Usha-Pratusha and Aswani Kumara, Acc No-1206

It is square in plan and top adorned with eight petal lotus but partially broken now. Below to it diamond series decorated in its four faces. Just down to it there is a small niches in each faces decorated with seated Surya images. All images have represented two arms with lotus stalk in each. There is no representation of horse or attendants etc with these Figures. The base part is divided as *Bhita*, *Kalasa* and *Karnika*. The antiquity bears the accession number 2251 and measure as 28x28x50cm approximately (Fig.5). This Sarvotobhadra decoration is divided into two segments besides the top lotus petal decoration. It is bearing accession number 2074 and metric measurement 33x33x60cm approximately. The lotus is segmented in three layer but the last upraised petals are broken. Below to it, a plane *bandhana* (band) type design decorated all around. Like few other it is executed in *tri-ratha* plan and the body adorned with two phase image decorations.

The upper part Surya images are depicted all cardinal directions along with attendants. All depictions of the series are arranged in seating position. The main deity is holding lotus stalk in their two hands and Aruna is depicted just in front to leg.



Fig. 5. Seating Surya, Acc No-2251



Fig. 6. Surya, attendant, Acc No-2074

The attendants are depicted as in pot belly. The lower image series are decorated as standing image of lord Surya with Aruna. He holds two lotuses in his hands and attendants depicted either side of the image in the second projection which is separated with a pillar decoration. The attendant hold staff and mace head in their hands identified as Dandi and Pingala. The base is no decorative motives and divided as *Bhitta*, *Kumbha* and *Kapota* segments (Fig.6).

Conclusion

There are only five Surya Sarbotobhadra panel reported so far from Khajuraho, which was undoubtedly related to *Saura* cult

prevailed at that time. There is *Chitr Gupta* temple dedicated to Surya worship, besides that there are number of Surya images traced at Khajuraho temple wall and associated with other goddess in *Panchayatana* worship process. Most of sculptures in the Sarbotobhadra are of small in nature but in delicate form of execution. The association with eight door guardian, reclining mother and child, Aswani kumar's and concert Usha and Pratusha is provide religious significance of the *Saura* cult. All these decoration depicted on four surface of the sarbotobhadra and each face has represent Surya in different form like the twelve sun represents in the months of Hindu calendar year and four Figure represent the day circle. The finding are very less in number not because of less popularity of the cult but is also due to very rare kind of execution with the help of *Mandala* and *Tantra*. The Sarvotobhadra are although not unique in shape and size and found differences in execution of images with association to some Brahmanical deities, and the top adorned lotus of variant petal number as per *mandala* required.

All these antiquities are presently located at museum and selected for exhibition at New museum building at Khajuraho itself. It is describe that khajuraho's sun worship must have been Tantric –Vedic and the play *probhodhachandradaya* also mention about *Sauras* cult⁸ which strongly support by these evidences.

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