



**PRELIMINARY STUDY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS AT KONDHAVALE,
TAMHINI AND NIVE, TALUKA MULSHI, DIST. PUNE, MAHARASHTRA**

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Introduction

An archaeological exploration was carried out in Kondhavale, Tamhini and Nive, Taluka Mulshi, Dist. Pune, in the year December 2020 and December 2021. This route is popularly known as Tamhini pass. From Pune, it leads to Mangaon, Mahad, Raigad and Pali (Dist. Raigad). Kondhavale to Nive patch (32 kms) was explored. This paper reveals about

1. Archaeological remains in the area.
2. Link between already documented places in and around this area.

Kondhavale (18.518620, 73.592787)

Kondhavale is connected to Mulshi road. Archaeological remains are located at Kondhavale road approximate 3 kms from Paud village.

These remains are once famous among trekkers and history lovers, as in the year 2016 they were in news in local newspapers. A local person digs it out with help of his friends. At that time 40 hero stones were found (Maharashtra Times – 30 November 2016); but not documented. The place belongs to Vishveshwar Devasthan.

In first exploration (December 2020) 27 Hero stones, one Shiv linga , a brick structure and a lamp pillar (Deep stambha) were noted. The remains are kept in the premise of Vishveshar (Shiv) Temple, facing to east. There is a cremation ground near the temple.



1. **Hero stones** : Out of 27, three are for side carved hero stones; one of them is broken. They are kept South and North side of temple. There are two rows at South side. Death reason carved is : to save the cattle 7, fight with tiger 1 and remaining in war.

One hero stone shows a lady warrior, probably with her son.
2. **Shiv linga** : The Linga is detachable from Vari margā. The Linga can be differentiated in three parts, square at bottom, octagon at middle and cylindrical at top.
3. **Brick structure** : The brick structure is buried under debris. Bricks are rectangular in shape. Size is - . Brick can be dated to medieval period (Dr. Sachin Joshi – Deccan collage) Only part of this structure is visible.
4. **Lamp Pillar** : It is about 15 ft. tall and aprox. 10 mtrs towards Mulshi road.
5. There are more hero stones and medieval memory stones in debris.

In the second survey, it is noted that few of hero stones were fallen and broken.

Kondhavale is connected to Tamhini village by Mulshi river bank road.



Tamhini (18.448748, 73.431389)

Distance from Kondhavale is 27 Kms.

Tamhini village is located at the foothills of Tamhini pass. From Tamhini pass we can approach Lonavala, Andharban, Mangaon, Mahad, Pali.

Tamhini village is well-known for Vinzai Devi temple. Vinzai (Vindhyavasini – as per local tradition) is the main deity of Pradhan, Deshmukh, Vilekar, Sabnis, Mule, Vaidya, Deshpande, Tamhane, Malustekar, Zapadkar, Kelshikar, Harnekar, Salvilkar, Nizampurkar, Alibaughkar etc.



1. Three hero stones, one Sati stone, few sculptures were found. Also, remains of hero stone and few sculptures were noted.
2. Two Hero stones and sculptures are kept near a banyan tree.
3. There is sacred forest or “Devrai” at Tamhini and as per the localities it is a very ancient tradition to preserve it.

In second survey, it is noted that one hero stone is missing.

Tamhini is connected to Nive village.

Nive (18.487304, 73.434068)

It is Located at Tamhini pass, 5 kms from Tamhini village.



There is a `Mahishasur mardini` temple besides the road. The temple is newly constructed; but we can find hero stones, memory stone and few sculptures in the temple area.

There are 5 hero stones. Death reason is war. A medieval memory stone also noted.

Four Mahishasurmardini sculptures and two other deity sculptures were noted.

Observations

1. Hero stones found at these 3 places appear to be from same time span as per there working style. Period around 12th to 13th C.E.
2. The sculptures of “Mahishasur mardini” and others around are not example of fine work. Appears to be semi-skilled art of work.
3. These three places are inter-related and cannot be studied separately.
4. Awareness about heritage, archaeological remains and conservation among localits is needed.

Conclusions

1. These three places are not only interrelated to each other; but also, with other documented places in and around this area.
2. Tamhini and Nive are near and reachable to Kundalika Valley and Paratewadi – which is a ancient trade route (rock cut water tank and stapes are documented) (Vikram Marathe – 2016)
3. Umbard a prominent habitation on the ancient trade route known as the Lingya pass is located at foothills of the Tamhini pass. (Ashutosh Bapat – 2013)
4. The condition of these heritage monuments has worsened in two years. (December 2020 to December 2021) This underlines the need of public education in heritage management.



Scope for further study

Previous documentations have established the trade route in this area. Taking Paratewadi, Umbardi, Lingya pass into consideration, an extensive survey can join the missing links. It is a long legwork and will take time.

References

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