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Mahadeoshastri Joshi, Maharashtra Rajya Gazzeteer- Itihas Prachin Kal Khand 1 edited by
Ranchandra Pathak, Ratnagiri Jilha - Rajkiy Itihas by Ramchandra Phadke, Maharashtra
Virgal by Sadashiv Tetvilkar and websites like www.loksatta.com and thinkmaharashtra.com.

Objectives

1. Finding evidences of the existence of Sati tradition in Mandangad & surrounding areas.
2. Determine the approximate time of detected Sati monuments.

Keywords India, Sati custom, Mandangad, Sati monuments, Konkan region

In many places in the city, at the entrance to the villages, at the temple premises, at the
foot of forts, on the streets of the forts many rock sculptures are found. There are carved
sculptures in the specific sized stone rocks. The stone sculptures which was carved in the memory
of gallant hero's death is called virgal. It shows the soldiers in the war & the heroes who have
died.

1. Basham A.L., Hindi Translated, The Adbhut Bharat, (The Wonder That Was India),
Shivlal & Agraval and Company, p.133.
2. Mukharjee Radhakumud, Chandragupt Mourya Aur Uska Kal, Rajkamal Prakashan,
Navi Dilhi, 2007, p.235.
3. Basham A.L., Op cit, p.134, Kosmbi D.D., Marathi Translated Bhartiya Itihasacha
Abhyas, (An Intro To The Study & Indian History), Diamond Publication, Pune 2006,
p. 395.

The word Virgal is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Veer' & kallu from Kannada. Kallu
means stone, rocks or slab. The stone of heroic is called Virgal. A steep, rectangular stone is a
structure of the Virgals, which are carved

With a four pointed frame & a domed top. In the square, the events of war, recumbent
hero & carved Sun & moon in dome. It means that the Sun & Moon remain in the sky, stay in the
limelight of this hero. Sati-shila (sati monument/ Sati rock) is also a type of such heroic
monument / Virgal. This monastery was built in ancient times & especially during the medieval
period, as a memorial of his brave wife after the death of hero.

Mandangad is one out of nine talukas of Ratnagiri district. The geographical location of
this taluka is on the boundary of Ratnagiri & Raigad district. The ancient traveler made mention
of Bankot port in Mandangad taluka, the Pandheri caves & structure of temples in this area
shows that human habitations has existed in Mandangad area since ancient times. There are
many written proofs of post medieval history of Mandangad taluka. When Chatrapati Shivaji


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Mandangad. All these virgals / rock monuments have significance of Sati monuments. The virgals of Konkan are encarved approximately from the eleventh century to the eighteenth century.⁶

1. Basham A.L., Op Cit, p. 134, Kosambi D.D., Op cit, p.315
2. Tetvilkar Sadashiv, Maharastratil Virgal, Shivkrupa Prakashan, airoli, Navi Mumbai, 2013, p.112,113
3. Loc cit

Sati Monuments of Mandangad Area - Sati-shila of Mandangad area provided evidences of medieval history of Mandangad. On the way of Mandangad fort two Sati-rocks have been found near the God Bhairi temple at the foot of the fort Mandangad. After going out of Mandangad bus stand, there is a road leading to the fort on the left. The temple of God Bhairi lies on this road. Three sculptured rocks are leaned to the rough wall of stone outside of the Bhairi temple.⁷ Two of these have characteristics of Sati monuments. In the middle part of the Sati monuments a folded at right angles wore so much bangles hand is engraved. On the upper arm a big flower is carved. In the midst of the hand there is a sculpture of heroic horsewoman. One of them is carved with images of the sun and moon & seated armed folded two human shapes on the top of Sati rock. One unclear figure of man, standing with raising his hands is found near these two human shapes. On the upper triangular part of one Sati-shila has sculpture of the sun & moon. Secondary part of this Sati rock is visible below it. In this secondary part two armed folded seated human shapes & one raising hand thigh seated man is carved. Lower part of both Sati rocks are broken so that the sculptures of this lower part is not recognizable. One armed man shape is found in this broken part.⁸ It may be a scene of war. One carved rock is found in between of these two sati monuments but it is not Sati-shila.⁹

There is second hill in Mandangad, called as Mahadurga. A tar road named Mahu-Borghar road is intersected to Mandangad-Bankot road on left side. One raw road leading to Mahadurg is on the way of Mahu-Borghar road. The habitation of shepherds, called as Bhingloli Dhangarwadi is situated on the foot of Mahadurg. Before reaching this habitation, two roads break out on the foot of Mahadurga. Out of them one is going towards Dhangarwadi & another is towards Sati monument. One broken Sati rock is found on the foot of Mahadurg. People of this habitation have made tiled roof on the Sati monument. This roof is made by only 15 to 20 tiles in very small space. The broken Sati monument is placed under this tiled roof.¹⁰ The people of this habitation are worshipping the Sati rock as a goddess. The upper part of this Sati rock is in good

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Mandangad and nearby are found in historical documents. A lot of heroes dead in various battles of Mandangad area. Wives of these heroes went Sati (entrusted in fire vigorously) with the dead bodies of their husbands. These Sati monuments gave archaeological evidences of Sati custom of India. It proves the Sati custom was exceptionally in practice in Konkan region including Mandangad area.

Findings

1. The Sati monuments of Mandangad area are of medieval age.
2. The battles of various rulers of Konkan region were unavoidable because of political struggle for power.
3. The wives of chiefs & soldiers accepted Sati custom in practice of medieval Indian society.

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4. Tetvilkar Sadashiv, Maharastratil Virgal, Shivkrupa Prakashan, airoli, Navi Mumbai, 2013
5. www.loksatta.com
6. thinkmaharashtra.com
7. Field visit on 24th April 2018 to 27th April 2018.