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## **Lesser-Known Buddhist Caves Around Pune : A Preliminary survey (Bhandara Hill, Maan, Yelghol and Patan)**

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Buddhist caves of Western Ghats have preserved substantial information pertaining to the historical process of religious transformation. A Buddhist cave was carried by the archaeologists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The documentation is still of immense significance as many examples, no detailed documentation including the plans, site plans and elevation has been carried out. The documentation of afterwards. The importance of carrying out the detailed documentation of some of the earlier –documented caves sites or less – known caves sites of the detailed documentation of some of the earlier-documented approaches and issues related to the documentation work in present times it will further discuss how the re-documentation is relevant and how it affects the way of interpreting the architectural vocabulary of Buddhist rock –cut architecture. Many studies have been conducted on well-known caves such as Bhaja, Karle, Bedsa and Sheralawadi etc within Pune district, Maharashtra. This present presentation will illustrate preliminary study on lesser-known caves in Pune district, Western Deccan. Their remote location and simple character without sculpture or inscription have discouraged researchers to visit and study. But these lesser-known caves are important to understand more comprehensive religious landscape and practice in Early India. Small Buddhist cave-monastery on Bhandara Hill is interesting since its stupa of chaitya is rock-hewn but open air which is very rare in this region. Small cave site in Yelghol and Patan have very unique plan which were result of geological condition over there and intended ritual or practice. Unlike well-known caves nearby, it is very probable that these caves were cut for the of practice of monks or nuns rather than the visit of Buddhist followers.

Lesser interests on these minor cave sites have caused lesser care of conservation thus this can lead the damage of these sites any day. This present presentation will illustrate present condition of these sites along with field-attending photography and observation

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