
The Sculpture of Odisha- A Study on Women on Odishan Temple

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Abstract: *The ancient history of Odisha province is rise like other province of ancient and medieval India from the Vedic and Epic literature. From the Indian literature, we can approach that the land Odisha was inhabited before the 6th century B.C. some of the oldest relics of human habitation was found in the hilly tracts to the west of the flat coast land of Odisha where the stone implements are discovered. There is enough evidences on stone temple in Odisha. The temples are beautified with various sculptural arts. Among the various sculpture the female images has been found large than other images. The sculpture on the rock was developed during the period Kharavela reign. The female sculpture are beautified the architecture of Odisha. There are variety of women sculptures found in the Odishan ancient and medieval art and architectures on the walls of the temple and caves. The categories like apsara, musicians, dancers, alakanyas, goddess, aslila-murti of women's are representing in the sculpture on the wall of temple of Odisha. Odishan temple had the wealth of female imagery to give affords ample opportunity to trace the stylistic evolution of the ideal female figure in respect to body proportions ornamentation, coiffure and pose.*

Keywords: *female sculpture, apasaras, alakanyas, parsva-devata, mithuna*

1. INTRODUCTION

The temple and statue are so many stages in the approach to *moksa*. They are halting places providing rest and support for the one unanimous tradition that flows through the word of the Veda and is borne along by the ritual in inviolable and multifold pattern. The Indian art had passed a zenith in the large towns of Indus valley¹. A large number of human figures has been unearthed at Harappa, Mahenjo-daro and Chanho-daro. The majority of which are female. Some of these like the figure of a woman kneading dough or holding a dish of cakes in her arms may have been toys or dolls for children. The holding children or obviously pregnant may have been intended as aid towards procuring offspring; while many of which are standing almost nude figures². The tradition is remains unbroken for the themes and forms of the art of Indus valley during third and second millennium B.C are continued in Indian art when it re-emerges in the 3rd century B.C. But in the part of Odisha the art has reemerged in the First century B.C- First century A.D during the Kharavela. The cave of Hatigumpha and Ranigumpha at Udayagiri and Khandagir hill of Bhubaneswar is a significant contribution to initiate the art in the land of Odisha³. The sculptural art of Kalinga divides into three broad categories. The first is iconographic range of sculpture of the religious type. The second is secular elements and the third is ethno-aesthetic modulations of the figural art. Sundararajan rightly point out that the Kalingan temple architecture go through three stages. Like the temple architecture the art has also follows the three stages, in which the Khandagiri and Udayagiri cave art is formative, the developing stage and developed stage. The sculptural art development has also goes through three stage, because of the very distinctive visual changes that occur in the modulations⁴. The changes in the art were likely caused by the political changes, variously under Sailodbhavas, Bhaumakaras, Somavamsis and the Eastern Gangas. The introduction of fresh guilds of artisans and artists were also change by time to time. Reasonably the land is inhabited by the mongoloid ethnic and the Kol-Mundari-Dravidian strain. In the historic period when the art was endeavors had been first initiated in public life and since art is the mirror of man, as seen in flesh and blood in his own environment and tracts. Immediately around him as much around the artist-artisan agencies which plays a vital role in the formulations of the physiognomic archetypes and the anatomy. Further the development in urban fine arts like dance, music, drama and literature also casts a spell on the aesthetic potential and mannerism's of the people. They imbibe the same and transmit them in art forms. According to the iconographical study it has clearly point out by various scholars that the Brahminical religion is seen well entrenched in Kalinga already in the later Gupta time. That has impact upon religious art in temple seems to have dichotomized format. The Brahminical gods and goddesses, which are seen well prepared in the niche sculptures of the early or formative stage of Kalinga art. The arts are affiliated to Saivism, while fully seeped in the Epic-Puranic lore of Hinduism, in the form of Ramayana and Mahabharata themes.

In India the Gupta period played an important role in the development of culture in northern India. It is bold to assume that its influence was widespread throughout India. It is bold to assume that a parental style was developed and that a resulting centrifugal dissemination spawned regional manifestation. The brilliance of Indian art is its regional manifestations. There was no uniform standardization by which all work to be measured. The evolution and development of art and sculpture was only because of religion. In Odisha during the Kharavela the art and sculpture was started in early Christian era. But the particular importance in development and evolution of Odishan art in addition to the predominance of PasupataSaivism in its ancient evolutionary stage is emerging influence of Saktism/Tantrism and Vajrayan Buddhism. The development in the field of art and sculpture in Odisha particularly rewarding in that there exist continuous series of monuments spanning nearly thousand years. The evolution of Kalingastyle with degree of exactness and precision is at one place i.e., in the city of Bhubaneswar that never seen in other areas of the region⁴. Throughout its long period, the Odishan sculpture here created many beautiful images which can view with the best works produced anywhere in India.

With the tentative framework the chronological development for evolution of Odishan art particularly on female art was found in very large manner. In the late 6th and 7th centuries the major sculptural images are carved from the single slab of stone. The stone utilized for the images in the same as employed for constructing the temple and it generally quarried from the immediate vicinity. In the 8th and 9th centuries, the Odishan sculpture was influenced by Buddhist traditions. Towards the end of 9th century two sculptural techniques are introduced which greatly affected Odishan image. The first technique possibly influenced by natal-working tradition, secondly the backslab of the image is partially cut-out behind the image so that it serve as a frame. In the 10th century being carved in high relief and generally not isolated by scroll work appear less aloof and more earthy. In the 10th and 11th centuries the sculptural image in Odisha was crowning *vimanika* remain to serve as a canopy above the figures in the same manner as a creeper. By the 12th century the largest images on the temple wall are no larger niche figure (again excluding the *parvadevatas*) but the viral motifs and *alasa-kanyas* or *mithuna* (amorous couple) figures in the recess separating the *paga* design. During the latter part of 12th century and throughout the 13th century, the repertoire of poses is reduced, the activities becoming more repetitive, and there is a gradual diminishing of artistic skill. In the 14th century there is further reduction of artistic creativity and by mid-15th century the figures are not only rigid in pose but squat in body proportions as well. In the sculpture of Odisha, female image is taking more important position to mesmerize the architecture of Odishan art⁵. The arrangement of the sculptures on the temple body was gradual development and evolution towards delicacy and gracefulness. It has been already pointed out that the sculptural art of Odisha had travelled a long way by the time the Satruganesvara group of temples. The female figures on temple sculptures followed the tradition established by the earlier sculptors. Fabri has doubt the early sculpture was extant of provincial artists⁶. The provincialism was clearly manifested on the earliest sculptural art of Odisha. i.e. the forepart of an elephant carved out of rock boulder. The female figure on the temple of the first group occurring in the Parasuramesvara temple. The figures are marked by crudity and simplicity which characterized the bas-reliefs of that temples. In this group the figures are not found in the recesses. The figures are stand under the trees but not on the lotuses or lotus leaves as their later prototypes do⁷. In the second group, the female figures are product of a vigorous art, marked by naturalism and equipoise. Many of them stand in natural poses under the trees not so highly stylized as in the later representations. It is great difficult to conclude the female figure association with the Brahmanical temples. The early practice of female figures as monumental decorations might be constituted with Buddhist and Jainastupas. The railing pillars of Buddhist stupa at Barhut, of the Bodhi tree shrine at Budhagaya and of the Jainastua at KankaliTila near Mathura, have yielded a large number of female figures are found. These figures are now preserve in the various museum of India. That may be influenced over the early monuments of Odisha. In these two classes of monuments separated by centuries, the figures have been mostly represented with trees by their sides. Both of figures are stand in *torana-bhanjika* or *sala-bhanjika* poses. Later on the figures are decorated by holding beautiful objects or engaged in some kind of feminine pastimes. Many of them in the early monuments represent semi-divine beings is proved by the inscriptions on the railing pillars of the Barhutstupa which describe some of them as yakshis⁸. The purpose of carving these beautiful female figures both in stupa and temple architecture was probably beautifying the structures. The various pose of the female figures which indicate the mood of women. There are no doubts; these figures are conveying ideas from various literatures in India such as from the poets and artists. The inspiration and achieving grace and elegance, in

their creations, both the poets and artist borrows from Sanskrit literature. The female figures in the temple may depicted on divine forms, which influenced from Buddhist and Jainainto the Hindu fold and depicted various female goddesses like parvati, mahisamardini, durga, laxmi were represents⁹.

2. PARVATI

We have lot of evidences to find out the development process of the art on female on Odisha temple. There are various type of female sculpture has been found on the Odishan temple such as Goddesses, the *alasa-kanyas* and the *aslilamurtiat* a large. The female goddesses images were vastly carved on the Odishan temples. The image of Parvatiand Mahisamardiniwas most popular in the early Odishan temples. The sculptures are revolutionized throughout the history of temple construction. The goddesses images also developed in its feature, proportions, ornamentations, coiffure and the backslabe¹⁰. The early image of Parvati has with standing pose and four armed. Her major hands extended downwards, while the back hands are uplifts. The early images were assumes a rigid *samabhanga* pose. The images of is represented in the relaxed *tribhanga* pose¹¹. The images of deer and lion are represent near her feet on her pedestal in the early sculpture. But in the later time only lion was depicted. In the earlier image goddesses holding a cauri usually flanked while on later image the flanking figures are generally diminutive two armed duplicate of Parvati. The object holding in hands of Parvati also changes such as in the earlier figures the lower left holding a small vase while the stalk of the lotus on later images with flower blooming near her left shoulder. The uplifted right hand hold a rosary on raring image and *naga-pasa* on the later images. With rosary generally shiefted to the lower right hand held in the *varanda*. In the uplift left hand of the image was usually hold ketaka flower in the early sculpture, while in the later period holds an *ankusa*.

There are many deviations found according to the position of the images. For example, Besides that few deviations from those two iconographic forms in the image in the south *raha niche* of the Vaitaldeula, the west *raha-niche* of the Gopalini temple and in the north *raha* of the Parvati temple where the *ankusa* is in the uplifted right hand while the uplifted left hand holds a *kamandalu*. In the Khinching, the six armed images was depicted that the major left hand holds a *kamandalu* and an uplifted right hands holds a rosary. Probably in the early 10th century the image of *tapasvini* are introduced from Central India, which is appeared at Patnagarh. When the development of architecture with two storied *jangha*, in 11th century, as a result the proliferations of niches to be filled, where more esoteric forms of standing Devi are introduced. The Devis are introduced such as *pancagni-tapasya* and Vana-Durga. Occasionally Parvati assumes a seated position as at charda and motia when serving as a *parsva-devata*. Other seated images appear in Odishan temples on the gandi of the Vaitaladeula. On the niche lintels of the Someswara at Mukhalingam, on the compound wall of the Mukteswara, in the Jagamohana of the Yameswara and on theJagamohana of the Dakshinaprajapati temple at Banpur¹². There are numerous standing Devi with multiple arms, generally Durga. The best preserved images are on the south wall of the Madhukesvara temple. In the images the devi had eight armed and stand in *samabhanga* flanked on either side by a female attendant while lion is at the lower right. The similar image is fragmented in the Indian Museum at Calcutta. In the temple at Khanbesvari, at Sonepur, the devi had 14 armed stand as *parsvadevata*. While at Maninagesvara, within Jagamohana, devi had 18 arms.

3. MAHISAMARDINI

During 8th and 9th century A.D. possibly due to the influence of Bhaumakara rulers the images of Mahisamardini was replaced that Parvati as the *parsva-devata*. These forms of images are not enshrined in the *raha niches* of the subsidiary *pagasor* in the *chaitya medallions* on the *gandi*. During the Samavamsi rule, Parvati image was returned as the *Parsva-devata* at Bhubaneswara. Her image was virtually disappears from the decorative programme at Bhubaneswar except for as image on the Lingaraja¹³. On the other hand outside Bhubaneswara, the image of *mahisamardini* continued to be the popular though only few cases she enshrined as *Parsva-devata*. Most part of her image was housed in the special shined generally on the north side of the compound. Some time her image is now found within the sanctum, next to Linga, or on later Vaishnava temple, next to Vishnu. There are no any special texts mentioned in respect to weapons or attributes wielded by the goddesses in her fight against the buffalo demon.

In the early images the number of arms of Durga was varies from four to twelve. The arms does not increase uniformly, while on the latest examples the number is generally reduced to four. Generally there is three mode of

shape of Mahisamardini image has been found in the Odishan temple. i. the demon is represented with human body and a buffalo head ii. Depicted in human form issuing from the decapitated carcass of the buffalo and iii. The demon is represented completely in animal form¹⁴.

The first mode of Mahisamardini was found in Laxmaneswara compound and the other on the north *raha* of the *gandion* the Parsurameswara temple. There are a few images from the 8th century A.D where Mahisamardini has six arms, most of the images depicted the goddesses with eight arms. The iconographic type appears as Parsvadevata on the Sisiresvara, Vaitaladeula and a small temple north of the Manibhadrasvara. The loose images in the jagamohana of the Vaitaladeula, in the Jagamohana of the Mohini, in small shrine on the east side of the Bindusarovara outside of the Bhubaneswara, on corner shrines at KualoSuklesvara and Simhanath¹⁵.

Deviating from standard iconographic form are images at Mukhalingam, Simhanatha and on the Uttarasvera temple where the demon is represented in profile. Here the Mahisamardini had six arms on the north east *rekha-shrine* of the *Jagamohana*. In the Madhukesvaratemple goddesses had eight arms. There are also found the goddesses where has ten to twelve arms. The best preserved of the *Parsva-devatas* of the corner shrines at Kualo where the image has ten arms. There are also a twelve armed Mahisamardini from Dharmasala, now in odisha state museum, which is iconographically similar to Kualoimage¹⁶.

The second iconographical mode of Mahisamardini was introduced in Odisha towards the end of 8th century A.D. This pose of image was never be popular in Bhubaneswara except only on the *Jagamohana* of the Lingaraja. This mode is particularly popular as a *Parsvadevata* on 9th and 10th century. The image of monumental size was found at Suklesvara and Vatasvara. In this mode generally the goddesses had eight to ten arms. There are numerous variations in respect to body ornamentation as well as general stylistic change. For example in 10th century the *Yajyapavita* became stand and on most images. In the later period it replaced by a *Vanamala*. Regarding coiffure, the broad chignon on the top of the head is frequently replaced by a *Kirti-mukuta* or canonical crown in later image¹⁷.

The third mode of image of *Mahisamardini* is rare in Odishanart. The earliest survive image has found on the *gandi* of the Parasuramesvara and Markandesvara temple where goddesses had four arms and steps on head of the buffalo with her right foot. The images also found at Beraboi, Suklesvara, Tangi and the Maragudavelley of Kalahandi district¹⁸.

Besides Parvati and Mahisamardini, there are also many goddesses image depicted on the wall of Odishan temple. The special shrine for Sakti within compound of a Siva temple date from as early as 9th century. There are many evidences where we have found at Mukhalingam, Paikapada, Suklesvara and Simhanatha where they are still intact while loose image at other sites suggest the original shrine has disappeared. This practice culminates in the 13th century with the construction of the Parvati and Laxmi temple in the Lingaraja and Jagannath compound respectively. In the earlier Sakta shrines within compound of Siva temples the presiding deity is not Mahisamardini but rather Durga seated on a throne. In the later time other goddesses enshrined in special structures including Mangala, Manasa and esoteric Sakta and Tantric deities worshiped under various names¹⁹. The scholar believes that these enshrined deities which were in the niches or *chaitya medallions* of exterior walls that is seated goddesses are probably because of Sakta influence.

The seated images of the Devi can be broadly divided into three groups, i.e., Simhavahini Durga, b. seated Parvati and c. seated Durga. The first group of image was very limited which are generally housed in subsidiary *paga niche* or a *chaitya-medallion*. In this image Devi seated on her mount and her number of arms vary from two to ten. The second group of image is represented in a pacific form seated on a throne or a lotus cushion. Generally in this form of image Devi has four arms with major right hand extended in *Varada*. The seating position of Devi was in *Padmasanain* the few early image but in the most of the later images were pose in *lalitasana* with one leg pendants. The third group of image is represented in her warrior aspect; even though she is seated and generally has eight arms²⁰. Usually Devi image is seated in *lalitasana* on a throne with the lion beneath her seat.

4. SAPTAMATRIKAS

The Sakta influence is evident in the overall iconographic programme of the Odishan temple. The influence is so great, in fact, that image of women dominated the decorative motives of the most later temples. Like Sakta images in

Odishan temple, there are some evidences to depict more goddesses like river goddesses and *saptamatrikas*. In the early Odishan temple, there was depicted the river goddesses Ganga standing on her Makara and Yamuna on her tortoise, appear flanking the doorway into the mukhasala. There are found the images of Saptamatrikas on the temples of Odisha through the period. According to the Saiva Agama texts, the saptamatrikas are, Brahmani, Mahesvari, Kaumari, Vaisnavi, Varahi, Indrani and Chamunda²⁰. The deities had already appeared in such a position in the preceding Gupta period temples of adjoining areas. The images of river goddesses were depicted on the Parsuramesvara, at Singanath, Kualo, Bajrakot, Suklesvara, Paikapada, Mukhalingam and at the Ratnagiri monastery. The river goddesses were not seen in the later temple. The fact shows that, in the early Odishan temple have including important SilpaPrakash compose. But in the later period the importance of Ganga and Yamuna was steadily diminishing in the religious schemes.

The image of *Saptamatrikas* seems to have very popular in Odisha. Though it does not constitute an essential feature of the temple structure the early Odishan temples, there are several representation of those goddesses throughout the period. An important development in the iconography of Saptamatrikas was noticed by scholars in the Patalesvara temple at Paikapada, where the image is depicted babies on their laps except Chamunda. The earliest examples of *Saptamatrikas* are found on the Parasuramesvara temple the image appearing as early as the 7th century. It was particularly popular during Somavamsi period. Sometimes the image became monumental in size which is seen at Jajpur. On the other hand there are few examples of Saptamatrika in the arise of the Ganga period²¹. Sometimes there are scattered examples of individual matrikas such as *Varahi*, *Camunda* and *Nrsimhi*. In the scattered images the matrika aspects was not stressed. The collective worship of a group of *matrikas* appears to died out, there is no new image were created. Generally the number of *matrikas* is seven, sometimes it was eight. The *saptamatrika* image was depicted on the temples of Parsuramesvara temple, Lingaraja temple, on the Madhukesvara temple, at Simhanatha and Mahisamardini temple. There are eight *matrikas* depicted on the temple of Vaitaladeula²².

5. ALASA-KANYAS

The beautiful figures are caring in the stupas and temples of Odisha probably to beautify the structures. They have been known as *alasa-kanyas* in Odisha which is indicate women in idle moods. The texts of *SilpaPrakash* emphasize about the necessity of decorating temple with figures of maiden and its author tells that the *naibandha* is indispensable to architecture²³. The *alasa-kanya* was decorated all parts of the temple. The author has described illustratively sixteen type of such maiden. Such as *alasa*, indolent; *torana*, leaning in a doorway; *mugdha*, innocent simple girl; *manini*, resentful offended girl; *dalamalika*, drawing down towards her the branches of trees; *padmagandha*, smelling lotus; *darpana*, looking into mirrors; *vinyasa*, thoughtful and meditative; *ketakibandha*, wearing ketaki blossoms; *matrimurti*, mother with child; *gunthana*, bashful girl displaying her back; *chamera*, holding a fly-wisk; *nartaki*, dancer with hand joined together above her head; *sukarika*, play with parrot or maina; *nupurapadika*, with one leg bent and pulling on ankle bells; *mardala*, drummer. Chronologically these figures can be divided four or five groups²⁴. In the 8th century the *alasa-kanya* images are introduced in paga niches as a major motifs. The images were seductive and enticing, they are somewhat aloof, confined within niches and framed by lush scrollwork, and betray no sign of emotion. They are conscious of their charms seemingly lost in self-absorption. In this period the images are executed in perfect soft plasticity of modeling and perfect equipoise, seldom expanding beyond the boundaries of their niche frame. The images are more lithe in body proportions than 7th century figures. The breasts, were small in ratio to the wide hips, are no longer bound by a *kuncha-bandha*. The lower garment is nearly diaphanous so that legs are likewise fully exposed. The loose ends of the garment generally forming a backdrop. In the jewelry are well articulated in refined and enhanced the curves of the female form by contrasting the softness and warmth of flesh with the metallic hardness and precision of the ornaments. In the 10th century, the development of *pancha-ratha* plan, the *alasa-kanyas* are standard motifs on the corner or *kanika-paga*. They are carved in high relief, rather than being encased in niches and generally not isolated by scrollwork so that they appear less aloof and more earthly. The *alasa-kanya* images of 11th and early 12th centuries are some of the most beautiful figures created anywhere in India. Particularly on the Rajarani temple are the loveliest of all Odishan creations. They were more lithe in body proportions, having long and pliable limbs, and assume extremely graceful poses, their supple bodies softly bending like meandering creepers. The pictures are not animated more than

earlier, their actions are controlled and pleasingly seductive. Due to their higher placement from ground level, stemming from the increased height of the temple with its added *pitha* and two-story *jagha*, and the manner in which they are framed by lush scrollwork on multiple offsets or isolated in recesses, they are more celestial in appearance. They are appeared as heroic aspects in which activity there are engaged. The new motifs introduced is the *nupurapandika* (adjusting ankle-bells), *nartaki* (dancer with hands joined above the head), the motifs of wringing water from long tresses with a *hamsa* catching the drops, and the motifs of riding on the shoulders of a smiling, bearded male. In the end of 12th century and throughout the 13th centuries the pictures are repertoire of poses is steadily reduced. There is no longer a single ideal body which dominates as body proportions vary from temple to temple. The picture are noticed that scarf is loosely worn around the shoulder. The necklace is no longer fastened to a waist chain but merely loops between the breast. The earrings are invariably large. The hair is pulled tightly over the head. The frontal views left bald appearance relieved only by the drooping festoons of a jeweled tiara²⁵. In the 14th and 15th century the artistic creativity and technical competence on the picture was diminished greatly. The art was generally hold a *cauri* in one hand and stand in a frontal pose. In the mid-15th century the figures are rigid pose and squat in body proportion. The drapery becomes heavy and facial appearance facial features appear frozen. P.K. Acharya²⁶ has rightly said that the female figures is considered sacred, without presence of female counterpart nothing win. So the female figures of the *yaksi* was depicted in the early time which in the Vedic period is also think same. The *silpa-satras* clearly enjoined mentioned that, during the sacrificial offering the artisan must be accompanied by a girl or a courtesan.

6. EROTIC SCULPTURE

The erotic sculpture played an important part throughout the history of Odiahn temples. This figures appears on the earliest surviving temples and continues to be a major decorative motifs throughout the long period of time. Although the other images are eliminated from the temple but the Erotic figures are a decorative device which probably have sanction in the sacred texts. The Erotic imagery on the temple is same auspicious functions like other images either favorable or apotropaic. The images are depicted equally for prosperity or protection. In the sacred texts it has clearly referred that ritual must be performed for the sake of security and as a source of prosperity²⁷. The images on the temples were generally functioned in a dual capacity. Kramarich²⁸ rightly point out that the images on the temples were depicted in the dual purposes, may for the magical barriers and beautifying frame for the images enshrined within. Daniel Smith²⁹ said, the whole architectural-sculptural program of constructing temple is replete with magical incantations and rituals. From the initial selection of a site and the lining of the *garbha* pit with "female" stone to the chiseling ceremony of "opening eyes" of the idol and the installation ceremonies of bathing the image for proper worship. Although there are many explanations for the erotic figures in the temple compound, Fouchet³⁰ has stated that, the iconography of love cannot be divorced from the spiritual and everyday life of the Hindus where he has clearly define that the *caturvarga* (Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksa) is attain very significant part of Hindu. Kama stands for desire, passion and love. On the other hand other scholars feels that erotic figure carved on the temples represent Maya in the shape of Kama who always disturb the devotees. Who has surpass the Maya will attain success in getting the Brahmaan who reside in the AnandamayaKosa where there is no obscenity.³¹ The image of Kama, the god of Love, are included among erotic figures forming a Bacchanian frieze in *baranda* recesses of 8th century temple at Bhubaneswar. The devout were overcome on the temple expression rather than temptations to lewd thoughts³², however, they more likely testify to the rituals being practiced by the Pasupata and Kapalika sects. They are take responsible for the construction of the temples. According to the texts *Silpa Prakash*³³ categorically stated that the images of erotic are necessitate in the temples. Without these figures is place to be shaped like the den of the death. In this sense desire is the root of the universe. From desire all beings are born. These erotic sculpture are carved on the *anarthas* of the shrine wall and a explains that the figures are placed there to give delight. A.N. Parida stated about the erotic sculptures on the temples that "why the erotic sculpture was on the body of religious shrine was carved which is against the sense of morality." K.C. Panigrahi traces the origin of the erotic sculptures to the Tantricism and the form of Mahayana Buddhism which prevailed during the rule of the early Bhauma-karas. According to these texts, the sex is considered as the means to attain the spiritual merits. The writer, stated that once the sculpture was allowed on the temples, that may continue to force of convention. J.N. Banerjee and Dahejahas agreed that "in the early temples there are not specifically scene the sexual

scene, occasional explicit scene may be found. The early Satruganesvara groups of temple has depicts such scenes that sometimes include an onlooker as well. The Varahishrines at Chaurasi where series of eight erotic scene has been depicted was may be the love-making of tantric texts, the *KaulaChaudamani* which is belong to *Kaula- kapallika* cult.

The erotic sculpture was chronologically developed through the period of time where in early temple groups of Parasuramesvara and Svarajalesvara temple, the obscene of sculpture are conspicuous by their absence. The sculptures may divided into two categories, one is amorous couples (mithunas) and another is male and figures engaged in sexual arts. The first type of sculpture is sober one which does not specify the vulgar in spite of its sex appeal. In this type of couple stand close to each other with feeling of love. In this sculptures they place their hands on each others shoulder and in other the male is found fondling the female. The second type sculpture both are fund directly engaged in various sexual arts. Some of amorous couples are found on them, but they do not represent sexual postures. The erotic figure first make their appearance on the temple of Vaitala and Sisiresvara³⁴. Most probably the origin of erotic figure in Odishan temples because of Tantrism or rather to debased form of religion that prevailed in the early Bhaumakaras. The importance of pair from Vedic sacrifice has been essential feature. They are depicting mithuna motifs and mithuna on the temple. They are often used to depicted on the some slab and in many cases the dividing line is arbitrary. Generally the images are carved on the *pabhaga*, on the *tala-bandhana*. Block on lintels above *paga-niches* in the *barandah* recess or are housed in the *vajramundi* niches in the *anuraha* recess of the *gandi*.³⁵

7. CONCLUSION

The female sculpture is one of the important sculpture in Odishan temple features. The female images have been depicted throughout the temple construction of Odisha. In every act of female has been depicted. The female has depicted as goddesses, mothers, lovers, door keeper, dancer, musicians and *ratikas* (prostitute). The sculpture has speaks much about the social, cultural and economic conditions of the women. The sacred texts of Hindu specify that the women are regarded as sacred, for prosperity and protection, though the female image has been vastly depicted on the temples of Odisha. Every act of women may feel sacred and truth, the day to day life of Hindu society has been depicted on the temple.

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