

Study on Kalinga Style Architecture of Three New Shaiva Temples of the Undivided Puri District of Odisha

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ABSTRACT

The artistic features and architectural patterns of the Shaiva temples of Puri district are the vital parts of the Hindu temple art of Odisha in India. The coastal region of Odisha is famous in Eastern India for its Hindu monuments. The earlier art historians had documented the art and architecture of some notable temples of coastal belt of Odisha like Lingaraj temple, Sun temple, Jagannatha temple, Sovanesvar temple, Madhavananda temple, Muktesvara temple, Varahi temple, etc., but some minor temples of the undivided Puri district have not been dealt by them. Among all the extant Shaiva temples of the undivided Puri district, three new temples have been taken here for the scholarly discussion. These three Shaiva temples are such as 1. Balunkesvar temple of Paitabarai, 2. Uttaresvara temple of Annasara and 3. Akshandalesvara temple of Srirampur. All the above three Shaiva temples represent the *pidha* type of the Kalinga style temple architecture of Odisha. Some of the good sculptures of medieval and modern period are also noticed in these Shaiva shrines. The aim of this article is to focus on the artistic designs, architectural features along with the religious significance of the above three Shaiva temples of the undivided Puri district of Odisha in India.

Keywords: Shaiva, temples, art, architecture, Balunkesvar, Uttaresvara, Akshandalesvara, Odisha

I. INTRODUCTION

Odisha is a land of temples and it is also believed to be the Epic centre of *panchopasana* of Hinduism. All through the ages, Odisha has retained a cultural identity much more prominent than her geographical situations and political establishments. The Indian *Silpasastras* recognize three main types of temples known as the *Nagara*, the *Dravida* and the *Vesara* (*Ishana Siva Gurudeva*

Paddhati and other Texts). The indigenous scholars have classified the entire temple architecture of India into four types such as the *Nagara*, the *Dravida*, the *Vesara* and the *Kalinga*. Some eminent scholars like R.D. Banerjee, R.P. Das and K.C. Panigrahi have accepted the temples of Odisha as a subclass in the category of *Indo-Aryan Nagara Style* temples of Central and North India (Banerjee, 1931, p.335. see Das, Dec; 1994 and also see

Panigrahi, 1961, p.52). Odishan temples form a class by themselves and these Hindu monuments can be conveniently labelled as “Kalinga style” (Behera,1993, p.1). In this respect, An inscription on the capital of a pillar in the *Mukha Mandapa* of the Amriteshvara temple at Holala (Bellary district of Karnataka State) mentions the *Kalinga type* (along with the *Nagara*, *Dravida* and *Veshara*) as one of the four categories of temples in India (*Madras Epigraphica Report*, 1914-15, p.90). Most of the scholars have accepted the temples of Odisha as a sub-class in the category of *Indo-Aryan Nagara Style* of temples. According to *Manasara* “the Northern or *Indo-Aryan Style* of architecture covers the whole area occupied by the Aryans usually designated as “Hindustana”, the north of Tapti and Mahanadi rivers”(Sarasvati, 1935, pp.233-235). R.C. Majumdar has also referred that the region from the Odishan coast on the east to Kasmir on the west, the whole of North India was studded with temples of *Indo-Aryan Style* (Majumdar, 1952, p.436). The entire coastal areas of Odisha are covered with a large numbers of Hindu temples of the medieval and modern periods. The monuments of different sects of Hinduism are noticed in the undivided Puri district of Odisha. Among the extant temples, Shaiva temples are mostly found in the different places of Puri district.

Shaivism was a dominant as well as popular religion of the state of Odisha in Eastern India and it had also impact on the region of Puri district. Shaivism attained the zenith of its glory in Odisha during the 10th and 11th centuries A.D. In this period the Somavamsis had dominated the political scene of Odisha. The region of Puri district preserves a good number of Shaiva monuments of Odisha in India. The extant Shaiva temples of the Puri district suggest that Shaivism was popular in that region. Some of the Shiva temples have also been erected in the modern period. Almost all the old dilapidated Shiva temples of the Puri district have been renovated in the last quarter of the

20th century and a few in the first decade of the present century. The extant Shaiva temples of Puri district represent the *Kalinga style* architecture of Odisha in Eastern India. Odisha had a distinctive style of temple building activity, which commenced in the 6th century possibly with the Laksmanesvara group of temples at Bhubaneswar and culminated in the 13th century in the Sun temple of Konarka (Mohapatra, 1982, p.18). The district of Puri is one of the integral parts of the ancient Kalinga kingdom and it lies between 19° 28’ and 20° 35’ North latitude and 84° 29’ and 86° 25’ East longitude (Senapati and Kuanr, 1977, p.2). As indicated by *Bhubana Pradipa*, a text on temple architecture, the sanctuaries of Odisha have been grouped into three orders viz *rekha*, *pidha* and *khakhara* (Bose, 1932, p.78 and see Deva, 1997, p. 67). In Odishan temple engineering, every temple type has particular name. (Mohapatra,1982, p.14). The *Kalinga Style* of temple architecture is divided into four types such as *rekha*, *pidha* (*bhadra*), *khakhara* and *Gauriya* (Bose, 1931, p.78). Out of many temples of Puri district, three new Shaiva temples like Balunkeswar temple of Paitabarai, Uttaresvara temple of Annasara and Akhandalesvara temple of Srirampur are taken here for scholarly discussion. All these three Shaiva temples represent the *pidha* type of the *Kalinga Style* temple architecture of Odisha and they have some significance from both the religious and artistic points of view. Hence, the present article attempts to highlight the art and architecture along with the religious significance of the Balunkeswar temple of Paitabarai, Uttaresvara temple of Annasara and Akhandalesvara temple of Srirampur as far as practicable on the part of author.

II. Literature Review

Some scholars of Art history have done extensive works on the temple architecture of Odisha and also a few scholars have also undertaken some works on the temples of undivided Puri district of Odisha, but they have not extensively dealt with all the

extant temples in their scholarly works. Also most of the scholars have not given their proper attentions to the temples of the whole Puri district. The different works of scholars, antiquarians, historians as well as archaeologists are *Books, Magazines, Journals, Reviews, Antiquities, Records, Reports, Gazetteers, unpublished thesis, Proceedings*, etc. The titles of works and their authors are being mentioned below:-

T.E. Donaldson has written *Hindu Temple Art of Orissa* in 1985/86 and *Tantra and Sakta Art of Orissa* in 2000 respectively. These two works (Books) have dealt with some notable temples of Odisha only, but not covered the above three Shava temples of undivided Puri district..

R.P. Mohapatra has written a book *Archaeology in Orissa (Sites and Monuments)* in two Volumes (1986). This book contains a brief account of the some of the temples and their sites in the Puri district only, but it does not record the detailed art and architecture of the three Shava temples of undivided Puri district as undertaken by the author.

K.S. Behera has written *Temples of Orissa* in 1993. In this book, K.S. Behera has described the art and architecture of some notable temples of Puri district only, but not the three Shava temples of undivided Puri district as undertaken by the author.

The other important scholarly works and their authors are "*Orissa and Her Remains; (Ancient and Medieval)* by M.M.Ganguly, *Side Lights on History and Culture of Orissa*, Edited by M.N.Dash, *Orissa District Gazetteer; Puri*, Edited by N. Senapati and D.C. Kuanr, *Puri, A. Gazetteer* by L.S.S.O' Malley, *Canons of Orissan Architecture* by N.K.Bose, *History of Orissa* by R.D. Banerjee, *Studies in Orissan History, Archaeology and Achieves* by P. Acharya, *Early Stone Temples of Orissa* by Vidya Dehejia, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* by James Ferguson, *Temples of Orissa* By D.R. Das, *The Antiquities of Orissa*, Vol-I & II by R.L. Mitra *Archaeology in Orissa (Sites and Monuments)* by R.P.

Mohapatra, 'Decorative Motives of Orissan Temples' by K.C.Panigrahi in *Side Lights on History and Culture of Orissa*, Edited by M.N.Das, *History of Orissa* by H.K.Mahatab, *The Forgotten Monuments of Orissa* Edited by B.K.Ratha, *Art Tradition of Orissa*, Edited by Orissa Sahitya Akademi, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu Periods)* by Percy Brown, *Silpaprakasa* of Ramacandra Kaulacara, Translated and Annotated by Alice Borner & Sadasiva Rathasarma, *Early Kalinga Art and Architecture* by K.V.S. Rajan, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Two Volumes by T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Hindu Temples* (Two volumes) by Kramisch Stella, *The Art of India and Indonesia* by A.K. Coomarswamay, etc.

The articles related to temple art published are "Studies in the Temple Architecture in Orissa", in OHRJ by P.Acharya, "Types of Temple Architecture of Orissa", in JOHRS, Vol-XIV;No-2 by P.Acharya, "Temples of Orissa" in JOHRS, Vol-1 by S.K.Sarasvati, *Historical Accounts of Temples in Orissa* by U.N.Sarkar, in *Proceedings of Indian Historical Comm.*, Vol-XXXII, No-2, "The Temples of Orissa" in *Indian Antiquities*, Vol-LVII by R.D. Banerjee, "Kalinga Style of Architecture" in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol- XV by D.P. Ghosh, "Brahminical Temples of Orissa" in *Orissa Review; Monument Special* by K.S. Behera.

The above mentioned authors and their scholarly works have partially helped the writing of this article. Although their works have not covered the three Shaiva temples of the undivided Puri district as taken by the author, but still these works are invaluable for the present work.

III. METHODOLOGY

Both the primary and secondary sources have been utilized in the writing of this article on three Shaiva temples of the undivided Puri district of Odisha. The primary data have been collected through Gazetteers, Texts, unpublished thesis, the practical

observation, public opinions, hearsay accounts and interview methods during the period of experimental field survey. The collected data with regard to the art, architecture and religious significance of the Balunkeswar temple of Paitabarai, Uttaresvara temple of Annasara and Akhandalesvara temple of Srirampur of the undivided Puri district is primarily based on practical observations made by the author. The secondary data relating to the present piece of work are Books, Journals, Periodicals, Proceedings, Antiquities, Records, etc. The data collected from both the primary and secondary sources are critically analysed and discussed in the present article.

IV. DISCUSSION AND RESULT ANALYSIS

4. Art and Architecture of Three Shaiva Temples of Undivided Puri District

In fact, the region of Puri district in Odisha is mostly covered with Shaiva temples. Out of all the extant Shaiva temples of the undivided Puri district of Odisha, three Shaiva temples are taken here for the scholarly discussion. The names and sites of these temples are viz- Balunkeswar temple of Paitabarai, Uttaresvara temple of Annasara and Akhandalesvara temple of Srirampur. The descriptions of different aspects like location, art, architecture, religious sanctity, etc. of the above three Shaiva temples of the Puri district are briefly described below.

4.1. Balunkeswar Temple of Paitabarai

The temple of Balunkesvara is situated at Paitabarai village of the Gop Block of the Puri district in Odisha. This temple is located at a distance of 2 km from Konark town of Puri district and it is a renovated temple of that locality. The temple consists of one structure only and it is made of sand stones and bricks. This temple faces to east. The *vimana* of the Balunkesvara temple is of the *pidha* order *deula* and it is about 30 feet high from the surface of the temple complex. The temple is a *pancharatha pidha deula* and it has four fold vertical parts such as *pistha*,

bada (Boner and Rathsarma, 1966, p.142), *gandi* and *mastaka*. The *pistha* is plain and it is about 1 foot in height. The *bada* has six vertical parts, which are devoid of decorative elements. The base of the *bada* measures 19 feet in the east and west and 17 feet in the north and south respectively. The central niches of the three sides of the *bada* are housed with the *parsvadevata* images of Ganesha, Kartikeya and Parvati. All the side deities are housed in the *pidha* (Boner and Rathsarma, 1966, p.155) *mundi* niches. Ganesha is the *parsvadevata* of the southern side. The four armed image of Ganesha is carved in *ardhapayankasana* (Donaldson, Vol.III, 1986, p.1182) pose on the double sectional pedestal. The lower part of the pedestal is decorated with lotus petalled designs. Mouse, the conventional mount of deity is found depicted on the left of the pedestal. He holds *nagapasa* in upper right hand, broken tusk in the lower right hand, *ankusa* in upper left hand and a pot of *ladus* in lower left hand respectively. The deity wears *sarpayajnopavita* in his body. The backside of the head of deity is decorated with lotus petalled design. The image Ganesha is made of sand stone and it was made in 2000 AD. The slab of deity measures 1 foot 3 inches in width and 1 foot 1 inch in height respectively. The image Kartikeye is housed as the western side *parsvadevata* of the temple. The four armed image of Kartikeya is carved standing posture on the double sectional pedestal. The lower part of the pedestal is decorated with lotus petalled designs. Peacock, the conventional mount of deity is found depicted on the right



of the pedestal. He displays *abhaya mudra* in upper right hand *varada mudra* in lower right hand, arrow in the upper left hand and the lower left hand holds the rooster cock. Devasena is lifting the legs of the rooster cock noticed in the pedestal. The mage is made of *Baulmala pathara*. The slab of deity measures 1 foot 4 inches in width and 2 feet 1 inch in height respectively. Devi Parvati is the *parsvadevata* of the northern side. The image of Parvati is the original side deity of the temple. The four armed image of Devi Parvati is carved standing posture on the pedestal. The centre of the pedestal is depicted with a lion figure, which is the mount of devi Parvati. The four arms of Devi Parvati display *pasa*, *ankusa trisula* and *abhaya mudra* (Gopinath Rao, Vol.I, Part-II, p.361 and Das, Vol.I, 997, p.219). Due to restriction and covered by clothes, the detail iconography of the Devi Parvati could not be documented by the author at the time of survey. There is a *nisha* shrine of the *pidha* order erected in front of Devi Parvati. The *nisha* shrine is about 20 feet high from the surface of the temple complex. Lion, the mount of Devi Parvati is found installed on the pedestal of 1 ½ feet high. It is noticed in front of the *nisha* shrine.

The *gandi* (Bose, 1931, p.181) of the *vimana* is a pyramidal superstructure and it continues the *pancharatha* plan of the *bada*. The *gandi* consists of 5 flat shaped *pidhas* and each *pidha* is decorated with *tankus* in all sides. *pidha mastaka* design is found on the centre of the eastern *raha* of the *gandi*. The *gandi* of *vimana* is devoid of sculptural elements. *Deula Charinis* are depicted in the four cardinal directions of the *beki* above *rahas*. *Dopichha* lions are fixed on the top of the *kanilka pagas* of the *gandi*.

The *mastaka* of the *vimana* consists of *beki*, *ghanta*, another *beki*, *amalakasila* (Borner and Rath Sarma, 1966, p.141), *khapuri*, *kalasa*, *ayudha* (trident) and *dhvaja*.

The sanctum preserves the Sivalingam within the Saktipitha as the presiding deity of the temple. Besides the

presiding deity, the sanctum also preserves the brass images of Chandrasekhara, Parvati, Anthu-Gopala in the brass Khatuli, Panchanan Siva, Lakshmi and Narayani. The photos of goddess Kali, Radha-Krishna and Lord Jagannath Trinity are also found to be worshipped in the sanctum of the temple. The floor of the sanctum-sanctorum is covered with marbles

The sanctum has one doorway towards east. Recently, the image of *navagrahas* have been inserted in the architrave above the doorway lintel. The doorframe niches of both sides are housed with the images of Nandi and Bhrungi, They are acting as the *dvarapalas* of the temple. There is a raised platform found built in front of the *vimana*. Bull, the conventional mount of deity is found installed on the pedestal of 1 foot high. It is noticed at the centre of the raised platform.

Additional Shrine of Panchamukhi Hanumana:-

There is a thatched house found on the northern side of the temple complex. The shrine preserves the images of Pancha mukhi Hanumana and goddess Rama Chandi. The ten handed image of Pancha mukhi Hanumana is carved standing posture on the double petalled lotus pedestal.



The deity Mahavir has five heads. In the right side hands, He possesses *kalasa*, *khadga*, *gada*, *japamala*, and one of hands of right side displays *abhaya mudra* while the left side hands display trident, *ankusa*, shield, *panapatra* and *gada* respectively. The



image of Pancha mukhi Hanumana is made of

Baulamala pathara The Slab of deity measures 1 foot 7 inches in width and 2 feet 7 inches in height respectively. The image of Panchamukhi Hanumana is made in the last decade of the twentieth century. The additional thatched shrine also preserves the image of goddess Rama Chandi, The four armed image of goddess Rama Chandi is carved in *lalitasana* pose on the double petalled lotus pedestal. The bottom of the pedestal is carved with scroll works. Goddess Ramachandi displays trident in upper right hand, *abhaya mudra* in lower right hand, *padma* in upper left hand and *varada mudra* in lower left hand respectively. The shrine also preserves the diminutive images of some unidentified deities for worship. There is a Tulali Chaunra found on the north west of the temple complex. An old Banyan tree is noticed on the southern side of the temple complex of Balunkesvara.

Date of the temple

The local people say that the temple of Balankesvara was possibly built in the early part of the 19th century, On the basis of iconographic features of goddess Parvati, the original temple of Balankesvara may be assignable to the second half of the 19th century A.D.

4.2. Uttaresvara Temple of Annasara

The temple of Uttaresvara is situated at Annasara village of the Gop Block of the Puri district in Odisha. It is located at a distance of 6 kms from Konarka town. The temple is a renovated shrine of that locality. It is made of burnt bricks. This temple consists of two structures such as *vimana* and *jagamohana*. It faces to east. The present temple is built in the second half of the twentieth century.

The *vimana* of the temple is a *pidha deula* and its height is about 20 feet from the surface of the temple complex (Fig. No.7). It has four fold vertical divisions such as *pistha*, *bada*, *gandi* and *mastaka*. The *pistha* is completely plain and it is about 1 foot in height. The base of the *bada* measures 11 feet 6 inches in the east-west and 13 feet 10

inches in the north-south. The *bada* is five fold vertical divisions such as *pabhaga*, *tala jangha*, *bandhana*, upper *jangha* and *baranda*. All the component parts of the *bada* are bereft of decorative elements. The central niches of the three sides of the *bada* are housed with the *parsvadevatas* of Ganesha, Kartikeya and Parvati, Ganesha is the *parsvadevata* of the southern side. The four armed image of Ganesha is carved in standing posture on the three sectional pedestal, which is decorated with lotus petalled designs and scroll works. Mouse, the conventional mount of deity is found depicted on the right of the pedestal. The backside of the head of deity is decorated with circular *prabhamandala*, which is carved with lotus petalled designs. He holds a broken tusk in upper right hand, a pot of *ladus* in upper left hand, rosary in lower right hand, and *parasu* (hatchet) in lower right hand respectively. The image Ganesha is made of sand stone. The slab of deity measures 11 inches in width and 1 foot 7 ½ inches in height respectively. Kartikeya is the *parsvadevata* of the western side. The four handed image of Kartikeya is carved in standing pose on the double sectional pedestal. The lower part of the pedestal is decorated with lotus petalled designs. The image of Kastikeya is made of *Baulamala pathara*. He displays arrow in upper right hand, *abhaya mudra* (Donaldson, Vol.III, 1986, p.1182) in lower right hand, bow in upper left hand and the lower left hand holds the rooster cock. The slab of deity measures 9 inches in width and 1 foot 6 inches in height respectively. Goddess Parvati is the *parsvadevata* of the northern side. The four armed image of devi Parvati is carved standing



posture on the pedestal. She displays *ankusa* in upper right hand, *varada mudra* (Donaldson, Vol.III, 1986, p.1188) in lower right hand, lotus flower in lower left hand and *abhaya mudra* in upper left hand respectively. The image of Parvati is made of sand stone and it is about 1 foot in height. Lion, the conventional mount of devi Parvati is not found in the pedestal. This Parvati image was built in 2020's. There is a flat roof shrine built in front of devi Parvati . All the side deities are housed in the arch shaped *mundis*.

The *gandi* of the *vimana* is a pyramidal superstructure and it consists of four flat shaped *pidhas*. There is a *pidha mastaka* design found on the centre of the eastern *raha* of the *gandi*. *Doppichha* lions and Deula Charini figures are not found in their respective places above the *gandi*. The *mastaka* of the *vimana* consists of *beki*, *ghanta* , another *beki*, *amala* , *khapuri* , *Kalasa* (Bose, 1931, p.182), *ayudha* (trident) and *dhvaja*.

The sanctum preserves the Sivalinga within the Saktipitha as the presiding deity of the temple. The stone images of devi Parvati and Siva, brass images of Chandrashekhara and Parvati are also found preserved inside the sanctum. Here Lord Siva is displaying arrow and bow in his hands. It is made of chlorite stone. The brass images of Chandra Shekhara and Parvati are being considered by devotees as the *Chalantipratima* of the presiding deity. Inner walls of the sanctum are covered with glazed tiles. Now, the floor of the sanctum is covered with marbles. The sanctum has one doorway towards the *jagamohana*. The doorway is devoid of decorative elements. Recently, separate *grahas* are inserted in the architrave above the doorway lintel. All the nine *grahas* are depicted in *yogasana* pose with usual attributes in their hands. The *jagamohana* of the temple is a flat roof structure and it is about 10 feet high from the surface of the temple complex. The roof of the *jagamohana* is supported by the four circular pillars. Bull, the conventional mount of Lord Siva is found installed on the octagonal pedestal of 1 foot in

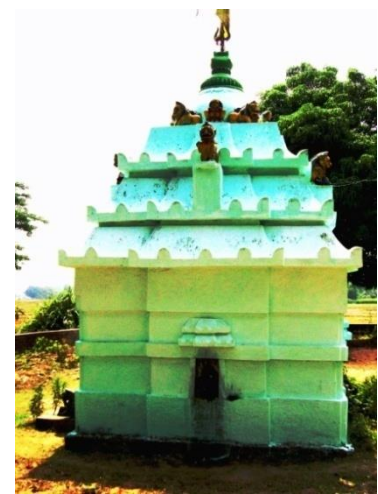
height. It is noticed near the doorway of the sanctum.

Boundary wall: There is a boundary wall built around the temple complex. The boundary wall is made of burnt brick. It is about 4 feet in height.

Date of the temple-

The local people of Annasara say that the original Uttaresvara temple was a thatched house. Architectural features suggest that the present Uttaresvara temple was possibly built in last quarter of 20th century A.D.

4.3. Akhandalesvara Temple of Srirampur



The temple of Akhandalesvara is located at Srirampur , which is situated 4 kms from Niali in the Balipatna Block of the Khordha district of Odisha. Initially Khordha district region was in old Puri district of the state of Odisha. This temple is also located one km from the Prachi river. In the first quarter of the 20th century the temple had been

renovated by the efforts of villagers. The local people say that the temple of Akhandalesvara was renovated in 1915 - 1920AD. The temple of Akhandalesvara consists of two structures such as *vimana* and *jagamohana*. It is made of burnt bricks and sand



stones. It face to east. The *vimana* of the temple is a *triratha pidha* (Boner and Ratharma ,1966,p.155) *deula* and its height is about 20 feet from the surface of the temple complex. The structure of the *vimana* has three vertical parts such as *bada*, *gandi* and *mastaka*. The *bada* of the *vimana* is *panchanga* type i.e. having five fold parts viz *pabhaga*, *tala.jangha bandhana*, upper *Jangha* and *baranda*. All the components of the *bada* are completely plan. The central niches of the three sides of the *bada* are housed with the *parsvadevata* images of Ganesha, Kartikeye and Parvati. All the side deities are housed in the *pidha mundi* niches. Ganesha is the *parsvadevata* of the southern side. He is also the god of Ganas, of the weird and impish crowd that forms the following of Shiva (Boner and Rath Sarma, 1966, p. XLIII). The four handed image of Ganesha is carved in standing posture on the double sectional pedestal. He holds rosary in lower right hand, a pot of *ladus* in upper left hand, *parasu* (hatchet) in lower left hand and the upper right hand of deity is broken. Mouse, the conventional mount of deity is carved on the right of the pedestal. The image of Ganesha is made of soft sand stone. It measures 1 foot 7 inches in height and 1 foot in width respectively. Kartikeya is the *parsvadevata* of the western side and He is splendid war-god, especially created by Shiva to overcome the Asura Taraka, who was devastating the world (Boner and Rath Sarma, 1966, p.XLIII) The four handed image Kartikeya is carved in standing posture on the pedestal. The upper right hand of deity is broken , the lower right hand is feeding the peacock, the upper left hand holds the rooster cock and the lower left hand lies the on the body of rooster cock. Peacock, the conventional mount of the deity is carved on the right at the pedestal. The image of Kartikeya is made of sand stone and it measures 1 foot 7 ½ inches in height and less than one foot in width. Devi Parvati is the *parsvadevata* of the northern side. The four handed image of goddess Parvati is carved in

standing posture on the pedestal. The upper right hand of devi is broken from elbow portion, the lower right hand holds rosary, the upper left hand is broken from elbow portion and the lower left hand is broken from the wrist position. Lion, the mount of Devi Parvati is carved on the right of the pedestal, Flower medallion is carved on the left side top corner of the slab. The slab of devi Parvati is severely eroded by nature. The image Parvati measures 1foot inches in height and a little less than one foot in width. This image is made of soft sand stone.

The *gandi* of the *vimana* is a pyramidal superstructure and it consists of 3 flat shaped *pidhas*. Each *pidha* is decorated with *tankus* in all sides. The *gandi* continues the *triratha* plan of the *bada*. The central *raha* of the upper *pidha* is projected with *jhapasimha* on each side. Deula charini figures are inserted in the four cardinal directions of the *beki* above *rahas*. *Dopichha* lions are fixed on the top of the *kanika pagas* (Boner and Rath Sarma, 1966, pp.148-154) of the *gandi*. The *mastaka* of the *vimana* consists of *beki*, *ghanta*, *amalakasila*, *khapuri*, *kalasa* (Bose, 1931, p.182), *ayudha* (trident) and *dhvaja*.

The sanctum preserves the *Sivalinga* within *Sakhipitha* as the presiding deity of the temple. The *Sivalinga* is not visible because it is installed below the *Saktipitha*. Inner walls of the sanctum are devoid of decorative ornamentations. The sanctum has one doorway towards the



jagamohana. The doorway is completely plain and devoid of decorative elements. The doorway wall is decorated with trefoil makara headed arch, which is supported by two pillars.

The *jagamohana* of the temple is a flat roof structure and its height is about 10 feet from the surface of the temple complex. It has three doorways and each doorway is devoid of decorative Ornamentation. Bull, the conventional of mount of the presiding deity is installed on the square sized pillars of 2 feet high. There is a humped bull kept on the top of the pillar.

Loose Sculptures

At the northern side of the *vimana* is occupied by some loose sculptures. These images are preserved as the earlier sculptures of the original temple. They are images of Kali, dancing female figures, humped bull and two *jhapa simhas*.

Kali - There is a big stone slab contains an image of goddess Kali. The two armed image of goddess Kali is covered in standing posture on the prostrate body of Lord Siva. She holds khadga in right hand and her left hand is broken from the arm portion. Goddess Kali wears a garland of skulls in her body. Both side top corners of the slab are decorated with small flower medallions. The image Kali is made of sand stone. It measures 2 feet ½ inch in height and 1 foot 1 ½ inches in width respectively.

At the southern side of the *bada* wall of the *vimana* is occupied by the some images like Astik-Jaratkaru and a broken slab of the Vishnu mage (only lower part is intact). The local people say that the broken part of the Vishnu mage was collected from the nearby place, Thereafter it has been preserved here. The two armed image of Jaratkaru is carved in *lalitasana* pose on the pedestal. Here the figure Astika is depicted on the left lap of devi Jaratkaru, The right arm of devi Jaratkaru rests on her right knee while the left arm holds the left arm of Astika. The left arm of Astika lies downward and the right arm is not clearly visible due to erosion. The slab of Astika-

Jaratkaru is made of sand stone. It measures 2 feet in height and 1 foot 10 inches in width.

A small modern shed is noticed in the southern side. It preserves the brass images of Radha Krishna, Vishnu and Salagramas, which are kept in a wooden Khatuli. There is an open *yajnomandapa* noticed in front of the *jagamohana* hall.

Date of the temple

There is no evidence to suggest the date of the earlier temple of that site. The local people say that the present temple was renovated in 2000 AD. On the basis of the architectural feature, the construction of the temple may be assigned to early part of the twentieth century

IV. Conclusion

We can conclude from the above discussion that the temple of Balunkesvara of Paitabarai preserves the Sivalingam within the Saktipitha as the presiding deity. Besides the presiding deity, the sanctum also preserves the brass images of Chandrasekhara, Parvati, Anthu-Gopala in the brass *khatuli*, Panchanan Siva, Lakshmi and Narayani. The photos of goddess Kali, Radha-Krishna and Lord Jagannath Trinity are also found to be worshipped in the sanctum of the temple. The additional shrine of Balunkesvara preserves the images of Pancha mukhi Hanuman and goddess Rama chandi. The ten handed image of Pancha mukhi Hanumana is carved standing posture on the double petalled lotus pedestal. From the available evidences, we can suggest that the place of Balunkesvara temple is a coordinating place of Saivism, Vaishnavism. At the southern side of the *bada* wall of the *vimana* of Akshandalesvara temple of Srirampur is occupied by the some images of Astik-Jaratkaru and a broken slab of the Vishnu mage. The iconographic features of Astik-Jaratkaru image indicate the artistic features of the Odishan art of the late medieval period. The local people say that the broken part of the Vishnu mage was collected from the nearby place, There is a small modern shrine noticed in the southern side of Akshandalesvara temple of Srirampur, which

preserves the brass images of Radha Krishna, Vishnu and Salagramas, which are kept in a wooden Khatuli. The presence of Vaisjnavite images suggests us that the temple site is associated with Vaishnavite faith of Hinduism. In fact, the surveyed Shaiva temples were constructed in the modern period, but some of the sculptures preserved in the temples sites belonging to the Odishan art of the medieval period. All the extant images of the above Shava shrines are executed by the artists of the Kalingan School of art of Odisha in late medieval and modern periods. Although the architectural features of the above three Shaiva temples are not so prominent, but from the religious point of view, these temples are important Saiva *pithas* of the undivided Puri district of Odisha in India.

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