

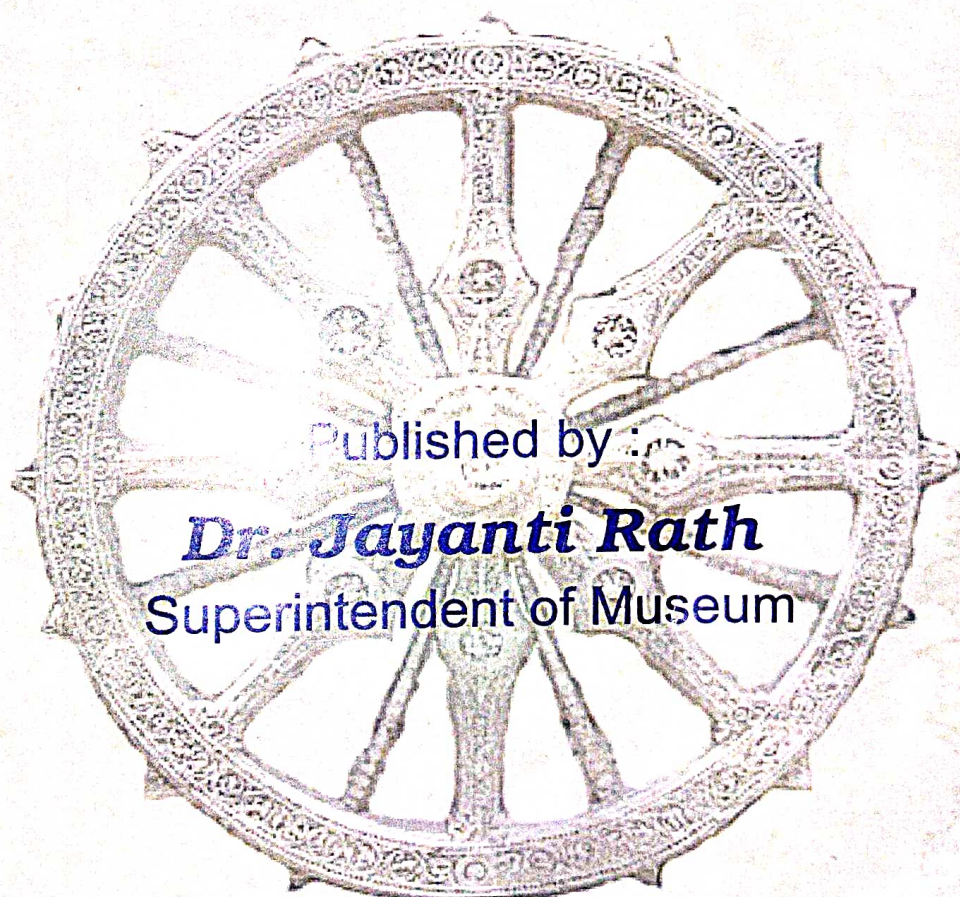


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A STUDY OF THE STRUCTURE AND ICONOGRAPHY OF THE IMAGES OF THE KESHORIPUR TEMPLE OF MAYURBHANJ

Arabinda Bose

Odisha is a noted land for its magnificent monuments. Different dynasties which ruled over Odisha had constructed a number of temples. Temples had been erected here for a long and continuous period. From the Indian point of view, in the architectural sphere, temples are of three types namely **Nagara**, **Dravida**, **Vessara**. The **Sikharabacame** the distinguish feature of temples of northern India. This style of temple architecture came to be known as the **Nagara** style. The foundation of southern style, called **Dravida** Style, characterized by storeyed arrangements in its elevation, also had its origin in the gupta period¹. But the Amritesvra temple inscription at Holal adds the Kalinga style to its list². **Vidya Dehejia** divides this construction of temples in odisha into three phases known as Formative phase, Phase of transition and culmination phase³. She includes fifteen temples into the formative phase, nine temples into the transitional phase and five sets of temples into the culmination phase⁴.

Generally, it is marked that Bhubaneswar was the main center of temple building activity. But in the peripheral region also number of temples were constructed. In northern Odisha building of temples began from 7th Century.A.D. when there was construction of Shiva temple at **Jalanga** (Dist - Balasore). It belongs to the category of Parsurameswara, Bharateswara and Lakshmaneswara group⁵.

Let N.N.Basu undertook a survey of archeological remains of the erstwhile, princely state of Mayurbhanj. In his report of the survey published in the year 1911, he cataloged the few ancient temples of Mayurbhanj⁶.

The village Keshoripur is located in Betnoti police station of Mayurbhanj district, approximately 30KM south east of Baripada. It is famous for its Chandi temple. The Chandi temple of this village is marked by laterite built Deula enshrined a ten armed Chamunda. The builders of the new temple have not followed the architectural style of the original temple of Khakhara order. The new temple is square in plan instead of being oblong. R.P. Mahapatra mentioned its original architectural features in archeology of Odisha, Vol-II in the following way. It is a panchayatna pattern temple built by laterite stone and Jagamohana in the center and four subsidiary structures at the corner, all built in khakhara order. Square plan of Jagamohana indicates to a date not earlier than the ninth Century.A.D.

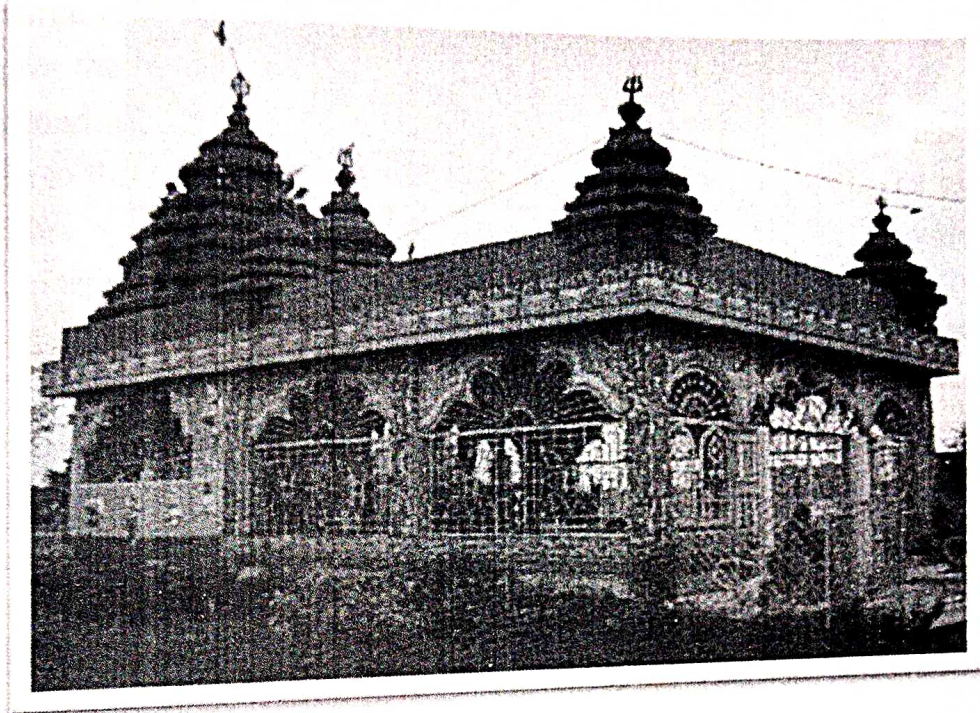
Built on a low upana , the temple is of khakhara order. The bada consists of Pabhaga and Jangha. The Pabhaga is a succession of four mouldings khura , kumbha , noli with facets and inverted khura. The Jangha is remarkable plane. The kanika has a few dharas at the corners. The anuratha is represented by a five faceted pilaster with dual base moldings. Khura and Inverted khura and repeated by another inverted khura molding at the top. The gandi separated from the bada by a series of three khura shaped mouldings is made of which simulates the outline of a Stylised chaitya window motive. The central Raha is represented by a miniature Rekha at the back and the roof of a khakara of the south and north. The frontal projection prominently extends upto the top of the kanthai. The chaitya window member is separated from the top most khura shaped. Khakara by a plain recess⁷. Unfortunately, all these narration of the original temple made by R.P. Mahapatra is no more in situ. Neither the compound wall nor the four subsidiary shrines at four corners are there. Only mass of rubbles lying scattered near the site are the silent witness to the glories heritage. The only presiding deity in the new temple and the ithyphallic deity , the male counter part of Chamunda are the only witness to the Saktapitha.

The deity is fixed on a pedestal made of black chlorite and is a succession of three mouldings with a spout in the shape of patta ,koni and patta in tirtha design as depicted in the pabhaga of a temple which is akin to the biraja temple at jagpur and Sarala temple in Jagatsingpur. The deity is a ten armed chamunda (3'4") .She in her terrific form is carved with round rolling eyes , an open mouth , building bulging teeth, and emaciated body with bones and veins visible, pendent breasts and shrunken belley. She is found seated in Maharaja lilasana , On the back of a prostrate male wearing. A set of decorative ornaments. Her jota mukuta is fashioned with several heads chopped off palms and a snake. Of her five right hands the lowest right hand is Abhaya , the others carry a katari , a sword, a skull and a damaru. Of the three extent left hands , the lowest is in Barada and the second holds a severed head and the third a battle axe. The trident held in one of her hands pierces the body of the postrate figure, over the head is the display of the elephant skin. The parsavadevata have along since being removed from there original niches.

The ithyphallic deity, the male counter part of chamundabelived to have been set on the back niche is now under workship in the premises of chandi temple. We can noticed the veins and the ribs with a terrible facial expression of Bhairava. The God dances on the prostrated male. Of his six hands, the extent upper most right hand displays a damaru. He is provided with a set of well designed decorative ornaments. Two femels attendants holding a human skull and trident flank. The image on either side. The beaded halo with flaming edge is pointed at the top. Now we can noticed newly built flat roof Jagamohana. According to R.P. Mahapatra and debalamitra the

original Jagamohana was triratha in plan. Its Pabhaga is in three mouldings. The plane Jangha represents lattice window in the central projection. The baranda is a khurashaped, over which rises the terraced roof in two stages, the recess in between, however has no clerestory. Internally Jagamohana is square.

Images of Chandi Temple of Kesoripur



Newly Built Temple of Kesoripur



Sanctum



Bhairaba

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