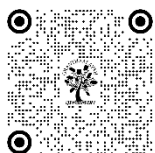


ICONOGRAPHY OF TWELVE SCULPTURES OF THE STATE MUSEUM OF BHUBANESWAR

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ABSTRACT

The iconography of six Shakta and six Vashnavite sculptures of the State Museum of Bhubaneswar is the main aspect of Odishan sculptural art in Eastern India. Saktism is a very important cult among the Hindus in all over Odisha as well as India. The beginning of Sakti cult in Odisha may be traced back to the days of *Mahabharata*. The growing popularity of the Sakti cult in Odisha is evident from the placing of independent sculptures of Sakti. The State Museum of Bhubaneswar has preserved a good number of the Sakta sculptures, which are collected from the different parts of the state. Among these, six Sakta sculptures are discussed in this article. The Vaishnavism was become widespread in the state of Odisha in the past. The cult of Gopinath Krishna was made popular during the Ganga era of Odisha. The Ganga period marked the climax of Vaishnavism in Odisha. Some of the Vaishnavite sculptures are collected from different parts of Odisha and now these are preserved in the State Museum for public display. Among the preserved Vashnavite sculptures of the State Museum, two Varaha, two Krishna and two Vishnu images are also discussed in the present article. The above twelve sculptures of state museum are the well workmanship of the sculptors of the medieval Odisha. In fact, the above twelve sculptures are very important for iconographical study. That is why; the aim of this article is to highlight the iconography of twelve preserved sculptures of Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar.

Keywords: Varaha, Krishna, Vishnu, Chamunda, Parvati, Images, Dharmasala, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

1. INTRODUCTION

The state Museum of Bhubaneswar preserves various sculptures, which were initially collected from different parts of Odisha. Among all the preserved sculptures of the Odisha State Museum, twelve (six Shakta and six Vashnavite images) are taken here for scholarly work. Iconography of these twelve sculptures is the main facet of the sculptural art of Odisha. Saktism is a very important cult among the Hindus all over India. In the field of religion, mother was the central figure [Bhattacharya \(1974\)](#), [Das \(1997\)](#), p.346. The worship of Sakti in India begins from very ancient times. In the primitive society, the mother played dominant role. All cultural traits

such as habits, customs, ethos and mores were transmitted through the females [Das \(1997\)](#), p.346. The Sakti cult also received royal patronage. The growing popularity of the Sakti cult in Odisha is evident from the independent sculptures of Sakti. The worship of Saptamatrikas formed an important aspect of the Sakti cult in Odisha [Behera \(1982\)](#), p.50. In Odisha different types of Sakta deities are found for public worship. The Matrikas (Mother goddesses) played a significant role in the day to day life of Odia people. The Odisha State Museum has preserved a good number of the Sakta sculptures, which are collected from the different parts of the state. Among these preserved Sakta sculptures, six images and their find spots are viz, 1. Indrani image of Dharmasala, 2. Vaishnavi image of Dharmasala, 3. Chamunda image of Dharmasala, 4. Varahi image of Dharmasala, 5. Parvati image of Bhubaneswar, and 6. Parvati image of Bhubaneswar are discussed in the subject. The advent of Vaishnavism in Odisha dates back to the rule of the Marahatta kings in the 5th century A.D. Vaishnava saints like Ramanuja, Narahari Tirtha and in later Sri Chaitanya had visited Puri and contributed a lot to the rising tide of Vaishnavism in Odisha [Behera & Donaldson \(1998\)](#), p.33. The worship of Varaha, Trivikrama, Madhava (Vishnu), Krishna and Narayana was become widespread in the state of Odisha since the medieval period as evidenced by the extant sculptures. The cult of Gopinath Krishna was also popular during the Ganga period, which marked the climax of Vaishnavism in Odisha [Behera & Donaldson \(1998\)](#), p.33. Some of the images of Vaishnavite deities are also preserved in State Museum. Among these Vaishnavite sculptures, six and their find spots are viz, Krishna- Vishnu image of Dharmasala, Varaha image of Dharmasala, Vishnu image of Bhubaneswar, Vishnu image of Bhubaneswar, Varaha image of Khichingi, and Gopinatha image of Bhingarapur. These Vaishnavite images are very important for their artistic as well as religious significance. Lord Vishnu is being worshipped in twelve concepts, which had its origin in Northern India during the Gupta Period. He is also well known as a deity in the trinity, as the one who maintains the universe. He is also worshipped as the supreme reality by the Vaishnavas. Varaha images are also found worshipped in different sites of Odisha. The cult of Krishna was quite popular in Odisha by Jayadeva as described in the *Gitagovinda* [Panigrahi \(1985\)](#), p.325. The images of Gopinatha are noticed in different sites of Odisha and some of these images are kept in the museum for public display. The Archaeology gallery of the Odisha State Museum is singularly fortunate in having a series of Vishnu images acquired from Bhubaneswar, Dharmasala, Bhingarapur, Keonjhar, and other places of the state. The iconographic features of the above six Sakta and six Vaishnavite deities of the Museum are the main aspects of Odishan plastic art. Hence, the author tries here to focus on the detail iconographic features of the six Sakta and six Vaishnavite images along with the prevalent religions of Jajpur, Khordha as well as Mayurbhanj districts of the state during the medieval period.

2. ADOPTED METHODOLOGY

For the compilation of present article, both types of data/sources are meticulously utilized here. The primary data is collected by author through practical observations of sculptures of museum. The photographs of all the twelve sculptures were practically taken during the period of experimental spot study/museum visit, etc. Some secondary data from books, journal articles are also methodologically used by the writer.

3. RESULT ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. ICONOGRAPHY OF TWELVE SCULPTURES OF STATE MUSEUM

Odisha is a land of rich cultural heritage in Eastern India and it has preserved a large number of masterpiece sculptures of different sects of the Hindu pantheon. Out of all the extant sculptures, some are found in the State Museum. Among these, the iconographic features of six Sakta and six Vaishnavite sculptures of the said Museum are significant by considering their sculptural quality. So, the present author attempts to highlight the iconographic characteristics of these twelve sculptures. These preserved sculptures and their finding places/spots are 1. Indrani image of Dharmasala, 2. Vaishnavi image of Dharmasala, 3. Chamunda image of Dharmasala, 4. Varahi image of Dharmasala, 5. Parvati image of Bhubaneswar, 6. Parvati image of Bhubaneswar, 7. Krishna-Vishnu image of Dharmasala, 8. Varaha image of Dharmasala, 9. Vishnu image of Bhubaneswar, 10. Vishnu image of Bhubaneswar, 11. Varaha image of Khichingi, and 12. Gopinatha image of Bhingarpur. The iconography of these twelve preserved sculptures of the State Museum is briefly discussed below.

3.1.1. INDRANI IMAGE OF DHARMASALA

The image of Indrani was initially brought from Dharmasala in the Jajpur district of the state. The Rigveda mentions that Goddess Indrani is the wife of Lord Indra. Indrani is one of the Astamatrikas of Hindu pantheon [Donaldson \(2000\)](#), p.315. The Indrani image is engraved in *lalitasana* posture on the decorated plinth. The right-side leg is in hanging while the left leg in the seat. The centre of the pedestal is tinted with elephant. A female devote figure is found engraved in kneeling pose with worshipping to elephant. Branches of tree are designed on both the sides of the elephant in the pedestal. Goddess Indrani wears a garland with creeper in her body. The right upper hand holds trident/*vajra*, the elbow portion of right side lower hand is broken, the left side lower hand holds a child whose head is missing and the left upper hand displays *ankusa*, which is damaged in its upper part. She wears anklets, bracelets, and armllets in her body. Her neck is richly decorated with necklace. In the backdrop, the head of Indrani has a trefoil arch motif; at the bottom, there is a makara head motif, and at the top, there is a *kurtimukha* motif. Two Gandharva figures holding garland in hands are engraved in the topmost comers of this slab. Chlorite is the material used to create Indrani's image. The height of the Indrani image is 48 inches and its width is 26 inches. In fact, the image of goddess Indrani is highly decorated with different ornamentations. Dharmasala's Indrani iconography has similarities with the 9th-century Odishan sculpture of the period, which is considered to be part of the 'Somavamsi' period. Because of its iconography and religious significance, Indrani's image draws the attention of both scholars and devotees.

Figure 1



Figure 1 The Indrani Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District, Odisha Circa 9th Century CE
The Photograph of Indrani Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District was Taken by the Author from the Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

3.1.2. VAISHNAVI IMAGE OF DHARMASALA

The image of goddess Vaishnavi was also acquired from the place of Dharmasala in the Jajpur region of Odisha. In fact, Vaishnavi is the worshipper of Lord Vishnu and She is one of the Saptamatikas of Hindu pantheon [Banarjee \(1974\)](#), p.504. Her place is under a *raja-vrikshya* ([Rao \(1914\)](#), Vol. I, Part-II, pp.383-384). The Vaishnavi image of Dharmasala is carved in the *lalitasana* pose. The left leg of Vaishnavi is in the seat while her right leg is in downward. The left leg's foot is damaged by forcible element. The pedestal is designed with a figure of Garuda, her *vahana* ([Donaldson \(2000\)](#), Vol. I, 2000, p.344). A female devotee figure is positioned next to Vaishnavi's right leg. The pedestal has decorations with scroll work on both sides. The lower left hand carries a newborn or infant whose head is missing, the upper right hand has wheel, the left side upper hand possesses conch, and the right side lower hand is wrecked at the elbow. She has a lengthy floral garb (*vanamala*) adorning her body. The goddess Vaishnavi's body is adorned with *katisutras*, anklets, bracelets, armllets, necklaces, and other items. The lower body is covered by the draperies. The backside of the head of goddess is tinted with a trefoil arch crowned by a *kirtimukha* motif and a makara head at the base. She is adorned with all of ornaments generally worn by Lord Vishnu. Apsara and Vidyadhara figures carrying garlands, flowers, *chammaras*, and folded hands are noticed at the upper corners. Additionally, the trefoil arch's border is carved with floral patterns. The stone used to create the picture of Vaishnavi is chlorite. Its dimensions are 27 inches in width and 49.5 inches of high from the wooden podium of the gallery. This Vaishnavi image dates to the late eleventh century A.D., according to T.E. Donaldson ([Donaldson \(2001\)](#), p.71). The iconography of Vaishnavi image of Dharmasala

demonstrates the creative elements of the tenth century CE. The exquisite creative quality of Vaishnavi image of Dharmasala is quite remarkable.

Figure 2



Figure 2 The Vaishnavi Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District, Odisha Circa 10th Century CE
The Photograph of Vaishnavi Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District was taken by the Author from the Odisha State Museum.

3.1.3. CHAMUNDA IMAGE OF DHARMASALA

The Chamunda image was recovered from Dharmasala in the Jajpur region of the state [Das \(1981\)](#), p. 12. Chamunda is one of the Saptamatrikas of Hindu pantheon. The Chamunda image is engraved in *lalitasana* posture on a dead body, which lies in the pedestal. The head of dead body is decorated with coiled hair. Her hairs are tied like a *jatabhara*. The pedestal of slab is exquisitely decorated with pig figures. Below the pedestal a standing human figure with a dog are finely engraved. A female devotee figure in kneeling posture is beautifully engraved near the left leg of Chamunda in the pedestal. Three of the four hands are missing and severely damaged. The severing head of a male human figure is found in her lower left hand. The image suggests that the ferocious goddess devoured up every drop of blood gushed out of the wounds of the demon and finally killed him [Mishra \(1989\)](#), pp.1-2. She is covered with a garland made of human skulls, known as a *khapuri mala*. Perhaps, the upper right hand holds a blood cup, which is distinctly visible, but from the arm to wrist portion of that hand is broken and missing. The face looks like very furious posture. Decorative ornaments like armband, bracelets, ear-ring, etc are provided to the image of Chamunda. She is depicted as shrunken belly and Her head is adorned with matted hair. Two diminutive human head figures engraved at the upper right part of slab. The slab's left upper corner features motifs of a conch and

a bell, respectively. The stone used to create Chamunda's image is chlorite. It is 46 inches of high form the wooden plinth and 25 inches in width respectively. Her shrunken belly, thin body and garland of human skulls show an outstanding sculpture. The iconography of Chamunda image of Dharmasala demonstrates the aesthetic qualities of Odishan plastic art of the ninth century C.E. In light of its iconographic traits, the Chamunda image is incredibly beautiful.

Figure 3



Figure 3 The Chamunda Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District, Odisha Circa 9th Century CE
The Photograph of Chamunda Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District was Taken by the Author from the State Museum of Bhubaneswar

3.1.4. VARAHI IMAGE OF DHARMASALA

A stunning representation of Varahi was brought from the Dharmasala site in the district of Jajpur. One of the "Sapta Matrukas" in the Hindu pantheon, Varahi is the shakti of Varaha, Lord Vishnu's boar avatara. The cult of Varahi developed during the medieval period as an auxiliary of Tantric Shakti worship particularly in Odisha as well as Eastern India. On the ornate carpet pedestal, the image of Varahi is sculpted in the *lalitasana* posture. A cow/buffalo figure is decorated in the middle of the pedestal. Flower designs with bud are found depicted in both sides of the plinth. Goddess Varahi holds a fish in upper right hand, blood cup in the left upper hand, the palm of the right lower hand is missing and it is carved at the centre of the heart. Goddess Varahi wears a necklace in her neck and a garland of flowers in her body. She wears anklets, bracelets, and armllets in her body. The face of goddess Varahi is slightly damaged. A diadem adorns the goddess's rear of the head. Her head is covered in hair that is arranged like coils of a snake that radiate forth in all directions. *Mukuta* in a pattern decorates her head. The *kirtimukha* pattern is capped with a trefoil makara headed arch that adorns the diadem's backdrop. On both sides of the slab are depictions of Apsara figures carrying garlands. The image

of goddess Varahi is carved in chlorite. It measures 24.5 inches in breadth and 45.2 inches in height from the gallery's wooden pedestal. The Varahi image of Dharmasala demonstrates the aesthetic qualities of the 9th-century C.E. The image Varahi is especially beautiful from the iconographical point of view.

Figure 4



Figure 4 The Varahi Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District, Odisha Circa 9th Century CE
The Photograph of Varahi Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District was Taken by the Author from the Odisha State Museum

3.1.5. PARVATI IMAGE OF BHUBANESWAR

The goddess Parvati image was gathered from Bhubaneswar in the region of Khordha, and it is currently housed in the Odisha State Museum's Archaeological Gallery. As the spouse of the god Shiva, Parvati is revered as a significant Sakta goddess in Hinduism. The four-armed figure of the goddess Parvati is carved in a standing position on the double-folded plinth. She has *nagapasa* in her right side upper hand, the left side upper hand showing *ankusa*, the right lower hand showing *japamala*, and the left lower hand without the characteristic. The lower hand's wrist section is absent. The *kirtimukha* motif is capped with *pravamandala*, which adorns the rear of Parvati's head. The upper corners of the slab have depictions of Gandharva figures clutching garlands. From the middle of the left side slab, a little female attendant figure is seen. At the left side of Devi Parvati on the slab is another female attendant figure carrying *pasa* and *ankusa*. Partially damaged, the image of the goddess Parvati's vahana, the Lion (Rao (1914), Vol. I part-II, p.360), is located to the right of the pedestal. The stone used to create the Parvati image is khandalite. Its dimensions are 15 inches in breadth and 25.3 inches in height from the wooden base. The Bhubaneswar Parvati image's iconography reveals the creative elements

of 13th-century Odishan art. Other decorative designs of the Parvati image are not clearly visible, because this material is not suitable for smooth carving.

3.1.6. PARVATI IMAGE OF BHUBANESWAR

On August 1, 1964, a second image of the goddess Parvati was also discovered in the area of Bhubaneswar's Deripodar tank. It is currently housed at the Odisha State Museum's Archaeological Gallery. On the double-petaled lotus pedestal, the Parvati image is sculpted in a standing position. Goddess Parvati's vahana, the Lion, is located to the right of base. Goddess Parvati is shown in Hindu iconography with her *vahana* lion at her sides (Das (1997), pp. 219-229). Goddess Parvati displays a *padma* with a bud in her left lower hand, *ankusa* in her left upper hand, *japamala* in her right lower hand, and *nagapasa* in her right upper hand. She is dressed in a tiny dress, a long garland, *hara*, *kankana*, *kundala*, and *upavita* in Her body. Devi Parvati is shown on the slab with a female attendant figure carrying *chammara* on either side of her. The goddess Parvati's head is festooned with a trefoil arch on the back, with an umbrella-shaped element at the top and a makara head at the base, flanked by lotuses flowers and buds at the base. The Parvati image is created out of sand stone. Its dimensions are 24 inches in breadth and 40.5 inches in height from the wood pedestal. The image Parvati of Bhubaneswar has iconographic elements that date back to the 9th century CE in the Odishan sculptural tradition.

Figure 5



Figure 5 The Parvati Image of Bhubaneswar of the Khordha District, Odisha Circa 9th Century CE
The Photograph of Parvati Image of Bhubaneswar of the Khordha District was Taken by the Author from the Odisha State Museum.

3.1.7. KRISNA-VISHNU IMAGE OF DHARMASALA

From the Dharmasala site in the Jajpur region of Odisha, a beautiful image of Krishna-Vishnu was gathered and is currently housed in the State Museum. The Krishna image is found carved in standing pose on twofold designed lotus plinth. Here Lord Krishna is designed in dancing posture. He holds *sankha* in his left upper

hand, *chakra* in upper right hand and the lower two hands are engaged in blowing flute (*bansi*), which is not found from the hands. Here, Lord Krishna wears a long *vanamala* in the body and also a sacred thread in his body. He is also adorned with anklets, armllets, bracelets, ear rings, and beaded girdle with several strands and a central locket is fitted to the waist. The head of Lord Krishna is crowned with a designed *kirita mukuta*. Garuda, the vehicle of Vishnu / Krishna is found depicted on the right of the plinth. The drapery covers the lower parts of the body. A herd of cows and calves, Gopas and Gopis with folded hands in *anjali mudra* are finely decorated in the bottom of the pedestal. Two female figures holding *chamara* and other attributes are found in the lower parts of the slab above the pedestal. Observing these two female figurines, some earlier scholars mention that these female figures represent Rukmani as well as Satyabhama, the consorts of Vishnu and Krishna respectively [Behera & Donaldson \(1998\)](#), pp.137-138. In the left middle of the slab is a figure of a horse on a mount. The design of the slab has a little image of Narasimha in the centre of the right side, holding the demon Hiranya Kasyapu's intestines in his hands. Lord Krishna-Vishnu's head is ornamented with a trefoil arch in the backdrop, the branches of the Kadamba tree at the top and the makara head at the base. On both sides of the upper section of the slab are etched images of Vidyadhara figures holding garlands. In the *uppara* left corner of slab, a little figure of Rishi is seen. A little wheel insignia is also observed to be depicted in the slab's upper left corner. Given its iconographic elements, the Dharmasala image of Lord Krishna is a superb example of Ganga art of Odisha. According to K.S. Behera, the Dharmasala Krishna-Vishnu image dates to the 13th or 12th century CE [Behera & Donaldson \(1998\)](#), pp.137-138. This Krishna image may be dated to the 12th century C.E. based on sculptural elements. Krishna-Vishnu image is carved out of chlorite stone. Its dimensions are 27 inches in width and 51 inches in height from the gallery's wood pedestal. Lord Krishna image is highly bejewelled with different body ornamentations.

Figure 6



Figure 6 The Krisna-Vishnu Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District Circa 12th Century CE
The Photograph of Krisna-Vishnu Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District was Taken by the Author from the Odisha State Museum of Bhubaneswar

3.1.8. VARAHA IMAGE OF DHARMASALA

There is a preserved image of Varaha that was taken from the place of Dharmasala in the Jajpur region of Odisha. Varaha is shown as a zoomorphic figure with a human body as well as a boar's head. On the lotus pedestal with two petals, there is a carved depiction of Varaha with four hands in a sanding stance. Garuda, Lord Vishnu's vahana, is missing from the pedestal. He has bracelets, armlets, anklets, and *vanamalas* on the appropriate parts of his body. At the left side of goddess, there is a carved image of a female attendant clutching *chamara*. He holds a wheel in his upper right hand, a *sankha* in lower left hand, the arm of Bhudevi in lower right hand, and the image of Sridevi in his raised left arm. Varaha is depicted triumphantly rising from sea water when he saves Prithivi [Blurton \(1993\)](#), pp.122-123. In Indian sculpture, mother goddess Bhudevi is revered. The design of trefoil arch adorns the background of the deity's head, with the *kirtimukha* motif flanked by scroll works at the apex and the makara head at the base. There are depictions of flying apsaras clutching garlands are noticed at top corners of slab. The Varaha image is engraved with chlorite stone. The image slab is 33 inches of high and 17 inches in wide. The Varaha image's style and iconographic features indicate the Odishan creative art of the 12th century CE.

Figure 7



Figure 7 The Varaha Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District, Odisha Circa 12th Century CE
The Photograph of Varaha Image of Dharmasala of the Jajpur District was Taken by the Author from the Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar

3.1.9. VARAHA IMAGE OF DHARMASALA

Another image of Varaha was also taken from the Dharmasala of the Jajpur district. On the lotus pedestal with two petals, there is a carved image of Varaha with four hands in a sanding posture. On the pedestal's left side is sculpted Garuda, the *vahana* of Lord Vishnu. He adorns his body with bracelets, armlets, anklets, *kundals*, and other jewellery. The deity displays wheel in his right side upper hand, a conch

in the lower left hand, the arm of the goddess Bhudevi in his right side lower hand, and the image of Sridevi in his upraised left arm. The right of god Varaha is sculpted with a female *sakshi* figure. The pedestal's core is carved with a Nagakanya figure. The trefoil arch that adorns the background of the deity's head has the *kirtimukha* motif at its apex and the makara head at its base. Granite stone was used to create the Varaha image. Its dimensions are 18 inches in breadth and 33.5 inches of high. The Varaha image's iconographic elements possess the Odishan plastic art of the 12th-century CE.

3.1.10. VISHNU OF BHUBANESWAR

The image of Lord Vishnu was brought from Bhubaneswar in the district of Khordha, and it is currently housed in the State Museum's Archaeological Gallery. The image of Vishnu is engraved in standing pose on the double-petaled lotus plinth. On the pedestal's left side is sculpted Garuda, the *vahana* of Lord Vishnu. The deity's right side upper hand holds lotus, right side lower hand exhibits conch, left side lower hand has *sankha*, and the left side upper hand holds a *gada*, in that order. The god is adorned with a knee-length wooden flower garland. The goddess' waist is exquisitely adorned with a belt. He has bracelets, armlets, anklets, and necklaces on. Lord Vishnu's body is covered in a *yanjopavita*. The goddess' head is embellished with *kirita mukuta*, a beaded headdress. The trefoil arch that adorns the background of the deity's head has the *kirtimukha* motif at its apex and the makara head at its base. There are figurines of Vidyadhara and Apsara clutching garlands noticed at the slab's upper comers. The Vishnu image is engraved in black chlorite stone. Its dimensions are 18 inches in breadth and 33.5 inches of high from the wood pedestal. Regarding sculpture, the image of Vishnu holds great significance. This Vishnu image's iconographic elements indicate the Ganga art of the thirteenth century CE.

Figure 8



Figure 8 The Vishnu Image of Bhubaneswar of the Khordha District, Odisha Circa 13th Century CE
The Photograph of Vishnu Image of Bhubaneswar of the Khordha District was Taken by the Author from the Odisha State Museum of Bhubaneswar.

3.1.11. VARAHA IMAGE OF KHICHINGI

The Varaha image of the gallery was taken from the Khichingi site in the Mayurbhanj region. The Varaha image is finely designed in standing pose on the body of Naga Kanya, which is depicted on the plinth. Varaha invariably presses his left foot down on the chest of Adisesa whose torso is often bent over back-wards, while stepping on the tail of the nagi [Sastry \(2003\)](#), p.7. The goddess Varaha is holding *shankha* in her left lower hand and *chakra* in her upper right hand. Her bottom two hands are connected at the Bailey part. The goddess Prithvi is shown on the uplifted left arm. The god is raising Bhudevi out of the deep ocean in this instance. The hair of the god is curled and adorns the head. The god adorns his body with ear rings, armlets, anklets, necklaces, and other accessories. The Varaha's hair is styled in a two-tiered *Sarpa mukuta*. To the right of the plinth is a representation of a female figure with her hands folded. The full-blown lotus bloom crowns the snake hoods, which adorns the back of deity's head. The Varaha image is made of black chlorite. The dimensions of the god slab are 12 inches in width and 19 inches in height from the wooden plinth. It's height is measured from the wooden plinth of gallery. The Varaha image's iconographic elements show the creative ideas of the Somavamsi era, which tentatively dates to the tenth century CE.

Figure 9



Figure 9 The Varaha Image of Khichingi of Mayurbhanj District, Odisha Circa 10th Century CE
The Photograph of Varaha Image of Khichingi of the Mayurbhanj District was Taken by the Author from the Odisha State Museum of Bhubaneswar

3.1.12. GOPINATHA IMAGE OF BHINGARPUR

There is a preserved image of Gopinatha that was taken from the site of Bhingarpur in the Baliana Block in the Khordha region of Odisha. On the lotus pedestal with two petals, there is a carved image of Gopinatha with two arms in a standing pose. Elbow portions of both the hands of Gopinatha are completely broken. He wears *vanamala*, sacred thread, armlets, anklets, bracelets, designed girdle, *jharavali* in the waist, ear rings, designed *mukuta*, etc. Garuda figure is carved

in kneeling position noticed at the bottom of the pedestal. The figures of *gopas* and *gopis* (devotees) both in standing and kneeling postures are depicted at the base of plinth. They are finely depicted holding *chamaras* and offerings for Lord Gopinatha. The *pidha mundis* of both sides of the slab are exquisitely carved with floral motifs, creepers, and honey sockless, border designs, etc. At the top of the ornamental motifs above, there are three *pidha*-shaped designs. The Kadamba tree branches are at the apex of the trefoil arch that adorns the background of the deity's head, with the makara head at it's base. On both sides of the slab's upper corner, there are decorations with Apsara and Vidyadhara figures carrying garlands and other attributes. Female figures holding *chhatra* is finely executed at the top of makara head of each side. It is a unique image of Lord Gopinatha from the artistic points of view. The image Lord Gopinatha is carved out of chlorite. Its dimensions are 33 inches in width and 64 inches of high from the wooden podium. The iconographic features of this Gopinatha image of Bhingarpur exhibit the Odishan art of the 13th century CE. In this aspect, a comparative study can be made by the author with Sakshi-Gopal image of Satyabadi in Puri district. Unlike the Gopinatha image of Bhingarpur, the Sakshi-Gopal image of Satyabadi is not adorned with gopis, vanamala, cows and calves, or kadamba trees. According to R. P. Mohapatra, it may be said that the Sakshi Gopal image of Satyabadi was originated outside of Odisha, namely in South India [Mohapatra \(1986\)](#), p 184. In fact, the sculptors of Odisha's Kalingan school of art created the Gopinatha image of Bhingarpur.

Figure 10



Figure 10 The Gopinatha Image of Bhingarpur of Khordha District, Odisha Circa 13th Century CE
The Photograph of Gopinatha Image of Bhingarpur of the Khordha District was Taken by the Author from the Odisha State Museum of Bhubaneswar.

4. CONCLUSION

Thus, the information above reveals that the twelve sculptures of Odisha State Museum under discussion are highly significant from a sculptural perspective. The original place of Dharmasala in the district of Jajpur is where the image of Indrani

was gathered. The iconography of Indrani image shows the Odishan creative art of the ninth century CE. The iconography on the figure of Indrani is really conspicuous. The image of Vaishnavi was collected from the place of Dharmasala and its body is decorated with anklets, bracelets, armlets, necklace, *katisutra*, etc. The iconography of Vaishnavi image possesses the creative ideas of sculptural art of Odisha belonging to the Somavamsi epoch. The face of Chamunda image of Dharmasala looks like very furious posture. The shrunken belly, thin body and garland of human skulls of Chamunda show the outstanding features of sculptural art of Odisha. The image of Chamunda is very marvellous by considering its iconographical features. The Varahi image of Dharmasala exemplifies the aesthetic qualities of ninth-century C.E. From an iconographic perspective, this Varahi image of Dharmasala is quite attractive. It is known from the fact that the Matrikas played a significant role in the religious history of Odisha. The creative characteristics of the 13th-century C.E. Odishan sculptural arts are indicated by the iconography of the earliest Parvati sculpture in Bhubaneswar. The Parvati image's ornamental decorations are obscured by a material flaw. The iconographic features of another image of goddess Parvati of Bhubaneswar suggest the creative art of the 9th century CE. The Krishna-Vishnu image of Dharmasala is exquisitely decorated with anklets, armlets, bracelets, ear rings, and beaded girdle with several strands and a central locket is fitted to the waist. The figures of Rukmani and Satyabhama, who are the consorts of Vishnu and Krishna are found carved at the sides of the slab. The Dharmasala image of Lord Krishna may be regarded as one of the finest examples of Odishan sculptural art of the Ganga era by considering its iconographical qualities. The Ganga era sculptures of Odisha are suggested by the Varaha image of Dharmasala's artistic and iconographic elements. Another Varaha image of Dharmasala contains iconographic elements of the 12th-century CE. In terms of sculpture, the Bhubaneswar Vishnu image is quite noteworthy. This Vishnu image's iconographic elements suggest the Ganga art of Odisha. The Varaha image that was taken from the Khichingi site has artistic characteristics of the Somavamsi era. Odisha's Ganga art has iconographic elements found in the Gopinatha figure of Bhingarapur. The quick overview of the many facets of the twelve sculptures covered above highlights some of their defining characteristics. As can be seen from these twelve sculptures, the Odishan sculptors have demonstrated their skill by perfecting their technique. In actuality, the twelve sculptures from the Odisha State Museum's collection illustrate the several facets of mediaeval Odishan sculptors' work. Considering artistic features, the twelve sculptures discussed in the subject can be rightly considered as sculpture masterpieces of the state of Odisha in India.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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