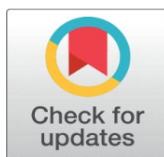
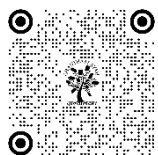


# SCULPTURAL ART AND ARCHITECTURAL PATTERN OF THE DHAVALESVARA TEMPLE OF DHAVALESVARA IN ODISHA

Dr. Ratnakar Mohapatra <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor in History, KISS, Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar-751024, Odisha, India



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## Corresponding Author

Dr. Ratnakar Mohapatra,  
[ratnakarmohapatra2017@gmail.com](mailto:ratnakarmohapatra2017@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to discuss on the sculptural art, architectural features of the Dhavalesvara temple of Dhavalesvara in the Cuttack district of Odisha. Dhavalesvara temple is a significant Shaiva Shrine of the Cuttack district of the state of Odisha. This temple is very famous shrine in that locality, for which, a good number of devotees come to visit this shrine. Old sculptures of different deities of both Saivism and Vaishnavism are also found to be preserved in the temple site, for which the site of the temple is considered as 'Hari-Hara pitha'. This temple initially consisted of *vimana* and *jagamohana*. In later period, *natamandapa* as well as *bhogamandapa* were also added to the main temple. The artistic as well as religious aspects of the Dhavalesvara temple represent a noteworthy Shaiva shrine of the medieval Odisha. The original Parvati image in the northern side *parsvadevata* niche is not noticed, in that place a Mahisamardini Durga image is inserted as side deity. The six armed and three headed image of Kartikeya is unique in the study of Odishan art tradition. The extant preserved old loose sculptures of the temple suggest us that these were probably collected from the local areas for the purpose of worship. Most of the loose sculptures are not in intact, so their identifications are not possible properly due to mutilation of images. All the images of different periods were finely executed by the Kalingan School of artists. Source materials from primary as well as secondary data are utilized in the writing of this article.

**Keywords:** Dhavalesvara, Shaiva, Temple, Odishan Art, Cuttack, Odisha

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The region of eastern Odisha is popular in Shavism and it is covered with a good number of Shaiva temples/monuments. Indeed, Shaivism was the key religion in the seaside belt of Odisha from the seventh century onwards and arrived at the pinnacle of its greatness during the Somavamsi time frame in the tenth-eleventh century C.E. The surviving Shaiva temples of the Eastern Odisha demonstrate that the undivided Cuttack district was popular as the place of Shaivism. The Dhavalesvara temple of Dhavalesvara is one of them. The temple of Dhavalesvara is most significant island Shaiva Shrine in the Cuttack district of Odisha in India. It is situated about 27 Kms. from the Badambadi Bus stand of CUTTACK city. The temple stands on the elevated

land on the western side of the island on River Mahanadi [Mohapatra \(1986\)](#), p.37. The name Dhavalesvara is derived from two local words viz; Dhavala (white) and Iswara (God/Shiva) i.e. attribution of Lord Shiva. The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva Dhavalesvara Shiva. The site of the Dhavalesvara temple is considered by people as well as devotees as a unique Shaiva shrine in the coastal belt of Odisha in Eastern India. The earlier temple of Dhavalesvara was constructed during the medieval period and it was possibly renovated and repaired by rulers of the Athagah State. From the cultural as well as historical point of view, Dhavalesvara temple of Dhavalesvara is a famous Shaiva shrine in the coastal belt of Odisha. A large number of people /devotees come to visit Lord Dhavalesvara on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of month of *Kartika*, when a big fair is observed here in honour of presiding deity. The day of fair is called *Bada-oshha* by the local people of Cuttack district of Odisha. Other festivals like *Pausa Purnima*, *Dola Purnima* and *Kartika Purnima* are also celebrated in the temple of Dhavalesvara. *Mahashivaratri* is observed by devotees in the temple of Dhavalesvara with great enthusiasm. In Odisha, *Mahashivaratri* is predominantly important in the Shaivism tradition of Vaishnavism. The site of Dhavalesvara temple is a coordinating place of Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism, which can be proved by the available of sculptures of the above three sects of Hinduism. The architectural features of the Dhavalesvara temple represent the Kalinga style architecture of India particularly of Odisha. The Odishan temples structure a class without anyone else and these Hindu landmarks can be advantageously marked as "Kalinga style" after the domain where the temples are discovered [Behera \(1993\)](#), p.1. According to Manasara, "Northern or Indo-Aryan temple architecture covers the entire Aryan-occupied area north of the Tapti and Mahanadi rivers, commonly called 'Hindustana'" [Sarasvati \(1935\)](#), pp.233-235. Eastern Odisha was a vital part of the old Kalinga region of India. The Kalinga Style of temple design is categorized into four types, for example, *rekha*, *pidha* (*bhadra*), *khakhara* and *Gauriya* [Bose \(1931\)](#), p.78). Here, the Dhavalesvara temple shows the *rekha* and *pidha* orders; the *vimana* is *rekha* order and *jagamohana* is *pidha* type respectively. The stone carvings and old sculptures of the Dhavalesvara temple date back to the Gajapati period. A good number of sculptures of medieval period are found to be worshipped in the temple premises of Dhavalesvara. In fact, Dhavalesvara temple is noteworthy for the profusion of sculptures. Observing the temples of Odisha, one scholar say that "Architecture in Odishan temples is but sculptures on a gigantic scale" [Kramrisch \(1946\)](#), p.218. Old sculptures of different deities of Saivism and Vaishnavism are noticed in the temple premises. Lord Dhavalesvara of Dhavalesvara is very famous in the eastern part of Odisha by considering its sacredness. People from the neighbouring Garjats and Cuttack town in particular assemble here in large numbers during festive occasions and the gathering reaches the climax on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of *Kartika* month when a big *mela* observed here in honour of presiding deity [Mohapatra \(1986\)](#), p.37. This temple initially built in two components like *vimana* as well as *jagamohana*. In later *natamandapa* along with *bhogamandapa* were also added to the main temple. Both the latter structures are open flat roof design of the twentieth century. This temple of Dhavalesvara is constructed in sand stones. It faces to western direction. Religious point of view, the temple of Dhavalesvara is considered by devotees as an important sacred place of the state of Odisha. The peaceful ambiance, in which the Dhavalesvara temple is situated, inspires spiritual sensitivity among the devotees. Being an important Shaiva shrine of Eastern Odisha, the author has taken this temple for focusing on the sculptural art, architectural pattern as well as religious significance of the Dhavalesvara temple of Dhavalesvara.

## 2. LEGENDARY ORIGIN OF LORD DHAVALESVARA

There is a local legend that the name Dhavalesvara is attributed to a miracle performed by Lord Shiva. A black bull calf was once stolen from a village by a local miscreant who then ran to a Shiva temple. While the irritated mob waited outside the temple, he secreted himself and the calf within the sanctum. The calf's cries were audible to the crowd. The thief begged Lord Shiva earnestly to save him from the mob. The Lord, seeing his plight, approached the throng in the form of a *Sanyasi* and inquired as to what was upsetting them. The *Sanyasi* brought the black calf outside to allay their concerns after being informed that they thought the thief and the calf were both hiding in the sanctum. The crowd let the thief go after realising that the calf was white. When the assassin vanished, the thief realised who had saved him. He admitted it and expressed regret to the group. He made a commitment to serve the Lord for the rest of his life. The name Dhavalesvara was given to Lord Shiva as a result of his transformation of a black calf into white. The above data with regard to the legendary origin of Lord Dhavalesvara is collected from an internet source [Dhavaleswar Temple \(2011\)](#).

**Figure 1**



**Figure 1** Dhavalesvara Temple of Dhavalesvara, Cuttack District, Odisha

## 3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

For the writing of this article, qualitative method has been adopted by the author. In fact, an extensive field /spot study had been practically undertaken by the author to collect detailed primary data / information on the sculptural art, architectural pattern, and religious significance of the Dhavalesvara temple of Dhavalesvara. Observations, public opinion, hearsay, and personal interviews were also made by the author during the experimental field study on the temple of Dhavalesvara. The author had interacted with Laxmana Pati, the chief priest and other senior priests of the Dhavalesvara temple to know the construction period of the temple. The photographs of the extant images and of the temple of Dhavalesvara were also practically taken by the author himself during field study in the month of May, 2023. The author basically collected primary data by practical field study on the extant sculptures and architecture of the Dhavalesvara temple. For the collection of data, the present author practically remained one day in the site of Dhavalesvara temple. In fact, the empirical method has been used by the author for the writing this article. Secondary data relevant to books, journals, magazine, etc. are also partly used in the preparation of the article. Thus, the source materials of both types are used by the author for writing the article on Dhavalesvara temple of Dhavalesvara.

## 4. RESULT ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. SCULPTURAL ART & ARCHITECTURE OF DHAVALESVARA TEMPLE

#### 1) VIMANA

The *vimana* of the temple is of the *pancha ratha* Donaldson (1985/86), p. 1186 *rekha deula*, and it rises roughly forty feet high from the ground. The *bada* of *vimana* is divided into five vertical sections. The *vimana* and the *jagamohana* are both submerged in the earth to the *pabhaga* level Mohapatra (1986), p.37. There are no ornamental embellishments on any of the *bada*'s component pieces. Ganesha, Kartikeya, and Parvati (the eight-armed Durga) as *parsvadevata* figures are displayed in the middle niches of the *bada*'s three sides. The image Ganesha is the *parsvadevata* of the southern side. The deity Ganesha is revered widely in India and is regarded as the most well-liked Hindu deity Das (1958), p. 48. On the double-petaled lotus pedestal, Ganesha's eight arms and dance position are depicted. The left side's two hands carry a pot of *ladus* and *japamala*, and one of the left side's hands is broken. The upper two hands hold a serpent, the right side's two hands are broken, and one of the right side's hands touches the bailey. He is covered with a *sarpayajnopavita*. He has a pot-belly that falls over his girdle and a *jata-mukuta* Donaldson (1985/86), p. 1017) hair style. On either side of the deity in the slab are two female attendance figures. The deity's mount is a mouse. On the pedestal's centre, there is an engraving of the deity's mount, a mouse. The Ganesha image is made of chlorite stone. It measures 1 foot 8 inches in width and 3 feet height respectively. The Ganesha figure possesses the artistic features of the Odishan sculptural art of the Gajapati period. The height of *pidha* shrine is 20 feet and it contains the image of Ganesha.

**Figure 2**



**Figure 2** Ganesha Image, Parsvadevata of the Dhavalesvara Temple

The eastern side's *parsvadevata* is Kartikeya. In the study of Odishan iconography and art tradition, the six-armed, three-headed representation of Kartikeya of the site is unique Donaldson (1985/86), p. 38. Kartikeya's likeness is carved in a standing position on top of a peacock figure that is positioned on a pedestal with two petals of the lotus flower. He is holding a small spear in his right hand. The elbow section of one of the right hands is broken, while another right hand

is in the *varada mudra* position. One hand of the left side lies on the rooster cock whereas the upper left hand grips *chammar*. A collection of decorations and a crown with a conical shape adorn him Donaldson (1985/86), p. 38. A Debasena figure is sculpted raising a rooster cock's legs. An image of an *apsara* is located on the slab's upper corner. The Kartikeya image measures 3 feet in height and 1 foot 7 inches in width respectively. Chlorite stone was used to create the image. This image shows the iconography of Odishan art of the Gajapati period.

**Figure 3**



**Figure 3** Kartikeya Image, Parsvadevata of the Dhavalesvara Temple, Dhavalesvara

Goddess Durga is the northern side *parsvadevata* of the temple and it is worshipped by local people as Goddess Parvati. So, it is a peculiar thing of the Dhavalesvara temple. Her roots appear to be among the tribal and peasant cultures of India. Durga is an established Goddess in mediaeval Hinduism, upholding dharma like a female version of Vishnu and defending the cosmos from the menace of demons Kinsley (1986), p.96. On the pedestal, there is a standing carving of Durga with eight arms. On the pedestal of the slab, there is a statue of Mahisasura. The *Puranas* record an intriguing struggle between Mahisasura and Durga and the eventual slaying of the latter with his friends Das (1997), p. 246. The devi Durga slab is where this killing scene is shown. The goddess Durga's hands have all been broken. According to the temple priests and the locals, Kalapahara a Muslim invader who raided temples in Odisha during the Middle Ages broke this image. Black chlorite stone is used to create the image of the goddess Durga. The author was unable to document Devi Durga's iconography in detail, because of restrictions and being completely covered by clothing. The image of Durga is 2 feet 11 inches in height and 1 foot 9 inches in width. It shows the artistic features of the mediaeval period of Odishan history. Devi Parvati/Durga is placed in 20 feet high *pidha* temple/shrine.

According to R.P. Mohapatra Donaldson (1985/86), p. 38, none of the current *parsvadevatas* date back to the construction of the original temple. Most likely, when the current temple was being built in the late mediaeval era, the images of Kartikeya, Ganesha, and Durga were housed. A lion figure is projected in the middle of each side of the *baranda* Behera (1993), p. 4.

The pancharath scheme of the *bada* is carried out by the curvilinear *gandi* of the *vimana*. The middle raha of the *gandi*'s five rathas is projected with a rampart lion figure on each side Bose (1931), p. 181. Lime mortar was used to cover the

entire *gandi*. *Dopichha* simhas are inserted at the upper parts of the *kanika-pagas*. Deula Charini figures are positioned above the centre *rahas* in the *gandi*'s four cardinal directions. The elements of *beki*, amalaka sila, *khapuri*, amala, auspicious jar, trisula with dhvaja Donaldson (1985/86), p.1183 are noticed in the *mastaka* of the *vimana*.

**Figure 4**



**Figure 4** Vimana of the Dhavalesvara Temple of Dhavalesvara, Cuttack

*Shivalinga* of sanctum is dedicated to Lord Dhavalesvara Shiva. Outsiders cannot see *Shivalinga* in this location. Above the sanctum is a brass serpent sculpture. Over the *Saktipitha*, a four-pillared *kanaka mandapa* of the modern period was constructed to safeguard the Shivalinga. The sanctum's floor is located 6 feet lower than the temple surface. The sanctum's inside walls are covered in marbles. Steps of ascending order are erected for entry into the sanctum-sanatorium. There is only one door leading to Jagamohana in the sanctum. At either side of the *pidha* mundi recesses of the doorway, Nandi and Bhrunji figurines are carved. They are assuming the role of the temple's *dvarapalas*. On the wall above the doorway lintel is a Navagraha panel. All nine gods (*Grahas*) are seen in *yogasana* with their hands holding as usual attributes. The entryway lintel's middle is decorated with a carving of the goddess Gaja-Lakshmi.

## 2) JAGAMOHANA

The *jagamohana* is a *pidha deula* and it rises around 35 feet above the surface of the temple premises. The five vertical sections of the *bada* of *jagamohana* are clearly noticed. There are no ornamental embellishments on any of the *bada*'s component pieces. Pyramidal superstructure is surmounted on the top of *baranda* and it is designed with *pidhas* that are flat in shape. *Tankus* are used to embellish each *pidha* on all sides. Above the *rahas*, *beki* figurines called *deula charini* are put in the four cardinal directions of *gandi*. *Dopichha* lions are put into the *gandi*'s top corners. The *jagamohana*'s *mastaka* is consisted of *beki*, *ghanta*, a second *beki*, *amalakasila*, *khapuri*, kalasa Borner and Sarma (1966), p.147 and flag.

The *jagamohana*'s interior walls are entirely plain. The *jagamohana* has a rectangular-shaped pillar in the middle, and a 4-foot-tall sculpture of a humped bull is mounted on it. On the left side of the sanctuary entryway, there is a little *kanaka mandapa* that houses the brass statues of Chandra Sekhar and Parvati. They are stored in a wooden box called a *khatuli*. They are taking on the role of Lord

Dhavalesvara Shiva's *Vijpratima*. A brass image of Panchamukhi Shiva may be discovered in the *jagamohana's* southern side inner central niche. Nearby, a preserved modern-era bull can also be seen. There are two doors on the *jagamohana*, one on the western (main) side and the other on the northern side. Figures of Nandi and Brungi are seen at the *jagamohana's* western side doorway. There is a big, contemporary sculpture of a humped bull in front of the doorway.

#### 4.2. LOOSE SCULPTURES OF SOUTHERN SIDE BADA WALL

**Sun God (Surya Devata):** The four armed image of the Sun God is kept in the southern side *bada* wall of the temple's *vimana*. On the chariot, the sun god's figure is engraved and is seated in *padmasana*. Seven horses in the shape of chariot drivers embellish the slab's pedestal. Sun god exhibits *padma* in lower left hand, *chakra* in the right upper hand, *sankha* in the left upper hand, and *abhaya mudra* in the right lower hand. The Sun God's charioteer, Aruna, is depicted holding the reins in his left hand and a whip in his raised right hand Donaldson (1985/86), p. 1140. A black chlorite stone is used for making of Sun God's representation. It measures 1 foot 6 inches in width and 2 feet 5 inches in height respectively. The artists from the Kalingan School of Art created this image. The iconography of the Surya image is the finest example of traditional Odisian art of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Near the Surya Devata, two contemporary bull figurines are found to be worshipped. There is an antique stone with the engraving 'Surya Yantra' is also noticed nearby the Surya Devata.

Some mediaeval loose sculptures of various Hindu deities are preserved on a little flat roof on the southern side. These are mentioned below:

**Radha-Krishna:** On the pedestal, the image of Radha-Krishna is depicted standing. The slab for this image is made to resemble a chariot. The stone slab has attendant figures holding parasols engraved into both sides. The slab's bottom is engraved with a horse, a woman, and a man carrying several objects on his shoulders. Radha-Krishna's upper portion is embellished with *pidhas* with double-storied designs. Chlorite stone was used to create the image. It is one foot wide and eight and a half inches in height. The Radha-Krishna's iconography has characteristics of Odishan sculptural art of the 15th–16th century CE. According to the temple priest, this artwork was first uncovered from a neighbouring abandoned site through excavation, and it was subsequently brought here for worship.

Figure 5



Figure 5 Radha-Krishna Image of Dhavalesvara Temple of Dhavalesvara, Cuttack

**Krishna Image:** Carved into a simple pedestal is a two-armed representation of Lord Krishna in dancing pose. The pedestal's middle has an engraving of a cow. God's right hand is in a dance position while the left palm of the god is hoisting the Govardhan Mountain. The Govardhan mountain has attendant figures (Gopis) holding upstanding pillars to boost the mountain. A scene of the Govardhan mountain is engraved on the slab's upper portion. Chlorite stone was used to create the Lord Krishna statue. It is one foot and one-half inches wide and one foot and nine inches tall. The iconographic elements of the Krishna figure are reminiscent of the Odishan artistic style of the 15th–16th century CE.

**Figure 6**



**Figure 6** Lord Krishna is Lifting the Govardhan Mountain is Noticed in the Southern Side of the Dhavalesvara Temple , Dhavalesvara

**Vishnu:** Carved into the double-petalled pedestal is a four-armed representation of Lord Vishnu in the *padmasana* pose. He is holding *sankha* in his upper left hand, *padma* in his upper right hand, and *chakra* in his lower left hand. The lower right hand is fractured at the elbow. A kirita *mukuta* is placed on the deity's head. On both sides of the pedestal, there are images of devotees holding folded hands. On Lord Vishnu's thigh, there is a little statue of Lakshmi (?). Chlorite stone is used to create the image of Lord Vishnu. Its width is 11 inches, and its height is 1 foot 7 inches. The Vishnu image's aesthetic reveals the 15th century Odishan art's artistic characteristics.

**Kartikeya:** On the double-folded pedestal, a standing depiction of Kartikeya image is sculpted. The pedestal is etched with a peacock figure on its right part. His right upper hand is holding an *ankusa*, his left upper hand possesses a rooster cock, his left lower hand is resting on the rooster cock's back, and his lower right hand is feeding the peacock. A Debasena figure is found engraved lifting the legs of a rooster cock. Sandstone is used to create the image, and nature has slightly eroded it. On the slab's left top corner is a flower medallion. Right of the pedestal, a peacock figure may be seen. The deity's slab is one foot one inch wide and two feet long. The iconography of the Kartikeya image displays the stylistic elements of the Gajapati-era classical art of Odisha.



**Figure 7**



**Figure 7** Old Kartikeya Image of Dhavalesvara Temple of Dhavalesvara, Cuttack

**Vaishnavi:** On the triple-sectional pedestal, a Vaishnavi figure is engraved in the yoga pose. She makes the mudras for *sankha* in the upper left arm, *chakra* in *uppara* right hand, *abhaya mudra* in the lower left arm, and *varada mudra* in the lower right hand. She has designed *mukuta* on her head and wears earrings. On the upper corner of the slab is a depiction of a full-blown lotus blossom. Chlorite stone was used to create the image of Vaishnavi. It is 1 foot 6 inches tall and has a width of 10 inches. The 16th century CE may be assignable to the date of Vaishnavi image.

**Figure 8**



**Figure 8** Vaishnavi Image of Dhavalesvara Temple of Dhavalesvara, Cuttack

#### **4.3. LOOSE SCULPTURES OF THE JAGAMOHANA DOORWAY**

Loose sculptures are found on the right of the *jagamohana* doorway. These images are Ananta Basudeva (Narayana), Trivikrama, Vishnu, Vishnu, Rama, etc.

**Ananta Basudeva:** Two handed image of Ananta Basudeva (Narayana) is engraved in a standing position on the designed podium. The elbow parts of both hands are broken. On each side of the pedestal is a figure of a female devotee with her hands clasped. The pedestal's bottom features scrolling details. On each side of the god is engraved with female attendant figures holding lotus buds. The *pidha mundis* are housed with these female attendant figures. The trefoil arch is used to embellish the back of the deity's head. Ananta Basudeva/Narayana's head is decorated with seven partially ruined hooded serpents. His body is adorned with a variety of Kalingan School of Art-made jewellery. On each side of the trefoil arch are images of *apsaras* holding garlands. Chlorite stone is used to create Ananta Narayana's image. Its width is 2 feet and a half, and its height is 4 feet. He is wearing a wooden flower garland. The iconographic elements of the Ananta Basudeva image point to the creative elements of Odisha sculptural art of the 14<sup>th</sup> century CE.

**Figure 9**



**Figure 9** Ananta Basudeva Image of Dhavalesvara Temple, Dhavalesvara

**Trivikrama:** Since the Middle Ages, Trivikrama has been widely worshipped in Eastern Odisha. Vamana (Trivikrama) is one of Lord Visnu's avatars. Vamana is the fifth incarnation of the Hindu god Visnu [Deborah \(1991\)](#), p.3-4. On the double-petaled lotus pedestal, Trivikrama's four arms are depicted standing. Garuda statue is engraved in the pedestal. The deity's hands are shown to be holding *gada* in the upper right hand, lotus in the lower right hand, disc in the upper left hand, and *sankha* in the lower left [Behera and Donaldson \(1998\)](#), pp. 85-86. The deity's right side leg puts on the podium, whereas the left leg is raised to the pedestal holding the fully broken image of Brahma. Under Trivikrama's raised leg, a Balidana scene has been etched. Bali is seen pouring water in this image to represent the gift being given to Vamana. Sridevi, Bhudevi, and Sarasvati are portrayed in the slab's sides. The deity's back is embroidered with a trefoil makara arch crowned by the *kirtimukha* motif. The upper portion of the slab has one *apsara* figure on each side. Trivikrama is a one-foot-ten-inch wide by three-foot-four-inch tall image. Chlorite stone was used to make it. It is made of stone called chlorite. The Trivikrama image has iconographic elements that are representative of the classical art of Odisha of the 13<sup>th</sup>-century CE.

**Unidentified Male Deity:** This image depicts a male deity with four arms standing on two folded pedestals. He wears a long diadem on his head. All four hands have been deformed, rendering their qualities invisible. He is covered with a garland that extends to his knees. Cloth is placed over the deity's lower body. A flower medallion can be seen on the slab's two side top corners. It is, according to the temple's priest, an image of Lord Vishnu. The author was unable to accept the temple priest's interpretation of the Garuda figure as a representation of Vishnu because it was not there on the pedestal. Chlorite stone is used to create the image of the male deity. It is 2 feet 5 inches tall and has a width of 1 foot 1 inch. This male deity's iconography incorporates elements of the Ganga period's classical art in Odisha.

**Vishnu:** On the double-sectional pedestal, Lord Vishnu's four-armed representation is etched in a standing position. He is holding *padma* in his upper right hand, *chakra* in his lower left hand (which is broken), and *gada* in his upper left hand. The deity's head is decorated with *mukuta*. He has a body garland made of wooden flowers. Chlorite stone is used to create the image of Lord Vishnu. It stands 1 foot 6 inches tall and has a width of 9 inches. The iconographic elements of the Vishnu image point to the stylistic elements of the Odishan sculptural art of the 13th-century CE.

**Figure 10**



**Figure 10** Vishnu Image of Dhavalesvara Temple of Dhavalesvara, Cuttack

**Rama:** A statue of Lord Rama has been kept on the site's Navagraha slab. On the double sectional pedestal, a two-handed image of Lord Rama is engraved in a standing position. He is seen as an archer. The right hand is severed from the elbow part whereas the left hand retains the bow. The god slab is entirely unadorned. It is made in chlorite stone. It stands 1 foot 7 inches tall and has a width of 9 inches. The artistic characteristics of the mediaeval classical Odishan art are seen in the iconographic elements of the Rama figure.

All the above sculptures in the right-side main doorway of the *jagamohana* are preserved on the detached Navagraha slab. These loose sculptures were collected /discovered from the nearby site as said by one of the old priests of Dhavalesvara temple. They represent earlier features of Odishan art and have nothing to do with the present Dhavalesvara temple [Donaldson \(1985/86\)](#), p.38.

#### 4.4. LOOSE SCULPTURES OF LEFT SIDE DOORWAY WALL OF JAGAMOHANA-

**Hari-Hara Image:** An image of Hari-Hara has been put into the *jagamohana's* western side wall niche. On the ornamented pedestal, the four-armed representation of Hari-Hara is sculpted in *yogasana*. The slab's pedestal is embellished with sculptures of a humped bull, a kneeling Garuda, and a standing person with a mace. He is holding a *chakra* in his upper left hand, a *sankha* in his lower left hand, a trident in his upper right hand, and a dambaru in his lower right hand. The characteristics of the hands in this image demonstrate that it is an amalgam of Hari and Hara. On the slab's top corners on each side, there are flower medallions to be seen. Chlorite stone is used to create the Hari-Hara image. Its height is 1 foot 8 inches, and its width is 1 foot 1 inch. The iconographic elements of the Hari-Hara image display the stylistic elements of the Odishan sculptural art of the 16th-century CE.

Figure 11



Figure 11 Hari-Hara Image of Dhavalesvara Temple, Dhavalesvara, Cuttack

**A Couple Figure:** A stone couple figure is found installed in one of the niches of western outer wall of the *jagamohana* and it is approximately 1 ½ feet high.

**Brahma:** A Brahma image is found fitted in the niche of the *jagamohana's* southern side outer *bada* wall. On the pedestal, which is adorned with a number of kalasas (pots), the two-armed representation of Brahma is discovered carved in the ardhaparyanka position. Sankha is in his left hand, and *padma* is in his right. Trefoil arches embellish the back of the deity's head. He has a body garland made of wooden flowers. He has *kirita mukuta* on his head. Chlorite stone is used to create the Brahma image. The Brahma image is 13½ inches in width and 20½ inches of high. The features of Brahma image may be assignable to the 16<sup>th</sup> century CE.

**Figure 12**



**Figure 12** Brahma Image of Dhavalesvara Temple of Dhavalesvara, Cuttack

Bedhakali image is found to be worshipped at the niche of southern outer wall of the *jagamohana*.

#### **4.5. NATAMANDAPA AND BHOGAMANDAPA**

The natamandapa is an open flat roof of the twentieth century. A huge bull figure of modern masonry work is found kept in the open natamandapa hall. *Bhogamandapa* is a pillared *mandapa* of the twentieth century. A *Shivalinga* is found to be worshipped in the centre of *bhogamandapa* hall.

#### **4.6. ADDITIONAL SHRINES**

Two small additional shrines are found at the western side. These are of Lord Rama and Radha-Krishna. A Narasimha image of fine workmanship is noticed in the front side wall of the Radha Krishna shrine.

#### **4.7. DATE OF DHAVALESVARA TEMPLE**

There are no reliable records pertaining to the time of the Dhavalesvara temple was originally built. According to the locals, Dhavalesvara temple of Dhavalesvara was constructed during the Gajapati era. In this regard, the temple priest Laxmana Pati opines that Sri Prataprudra Deva, the Gajapati king of Puri, had built the Dhavalesvara temple. According to local legend and several Shaivite images of the location, the Dhavalesvara temple may have been built in the sixteenth century CE. The local ruler of Athgarh repaired the temple during the succeeding era.

A Board of the Endowment Commission under the state Government of Odisha is now managing the Dhavalesvara temple.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

We can conclude on the above-mentioned facts that the Dhavalesvara temple is a completely renovated Shaiva shrine of the Eastern Odisha. There is a legendary origin of Lord Dhavalesvara Siva of the temple, which is popular in the local area of

the Cuttack district. The temple's Shivalinga is hidden beneath the *saktipitha*, which is not visible from the outside. The temple's *vimana* and *jagamohana* were both constructed during the Gajapati rule, but the *natamandapa* and *bhogamandapa* were afterwards added. The structures of the Dhavalesvara temple are the example of Odisha's Kalinga-style temple architecture. Due to the presence of ancient sculptures representing the Shaiva, Vaishnava and Shakta sects, the temple serves as a coordinating place of Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism. There is a peculiar thing of the temple that Mahisamardini figure there instead of the original Parvati image in the southern side *parsvadevata* niche of *vimana*. The temple's priests incorrectly revere it as Devi Parvati. The current Kartikeya, Ganesha, and Durga figures were most likely kept in the central niches during the late mediaeval era. In the study of Odishan iconography and artistic heritage, the six-armed, three-headed image of Kartikeya of the Dhavalesvara temple is exceptional. The Durga image of the temple is a unique finding in the history of temple art of Odisha. In the place of Parvati image, goddess Durga image is being worshipped as side deity. The old priest of the temple opines that this Durga image is found to be worshipped here from the time of renovation of the temple. The old loose sculptures from the temple site are still in good condition and show that they were taken from another nearby destroyed/ruined Vaishnava shrine. There are a few of the ancient loose sculptures still found, however they are preserved for worship. Available of the Shaivite, Vaishnavite and Shakta images in the temple site suggest that the temple is a coordinating place of Shaivism, Vaishnavism, and Shaktism. The iconographic characteristics of the extant images indicate that all the images were not made in the same period. All the images of the site belong to different periods of the Odishan art and these were mostly decorated with different types of ornaments as noticed in their bodies. Some of the loose sculptures are found mostly mutilated, for which their identifications are not possible at present. Considering the sacredness of temple site, a good number of devotees from the different places of Odisha come to visit Lord Dhavalesvara on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of month of *Kartika*, when a big *mela* is observed here in honour of presiding deity. The other festivals like *Pausa Purnima*, *Dola Purnima*, *Mahashivaratri* are observed by the devotees in the temple of Dhavalesvara. From the cultural point of view, Dhavalesvara temple of Dhavalesvara is an important Shaiva monument of the Eastern Odisha in India.

### CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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