CHAPTER - IV

THE DEUL OF MUKTEŚVARA

The Mukteśvara temple (photo 13) stands at a midpoint bearing many similarities to the early group of temples, while also looking forward to the later mature style. It served as a model in some ways for the temples of the later group, mainly the Brahmeśvara, which looks back at the Mukteśvara as a means of breaking with the experimental style of the Rājarāṇī.

This temple has been aptly described as "the gem of Orissan architecture"¹, "as a dream realised in sandstone"², a monument in which sculpture and architecture are in complete harmony with each other.

THE ENVIRONS

The Mukteśvara temple has an enchanting, picturesque setting. Encompassing an area of about 70.4 metres x 74.1 metres, this garden-like enclosure is popularly called the "Siddharanya", or forest of the perfected ones.³ In it are set various shrines spaciously - the Mukteśvara, the Siddheśvara, and some small shrines. The present setting resembles more

a well-maintained park, rather than an ascetic grove (Site plan, Mukteśvara Temple Complex - fig. 7, photo 14, 15 and 16).

The entire area rests upon what was actually a low mound slightly higher than the surrounding land. The south western side of the compound is empty except for the sun-dial. At the northern end of the lawn stands the Siddheśvara temple facing to the east - a large eleventh century structure. The western part of the compound forms a raised platform or terrace, while the south east contains a recessed courtyard which holds the Mukteśvara, its tanks and several miniature temples. M.M. Ganguly says that this recessed courtyard was prepared by scooping out and dressing the central and eastern portion of the mound. The courtyard is approachable by two short flights of steps - one from the south and the other from the north.

The western raised terrace has six miniature temples (photo 17). These temples are placed just at the point where the raised terrace meets the recessed courtyard. These temples are built on a north-south alignment. Their entrances face east and the shrines are arranged in two groups of three each, with a gap between the two groups which are alligned in a east-west axis leading to the entrance of the Mukteśvara.

On the south sector, one encounters a group of four miniature temples (photo 18). All these temples have a strict north-south alignment, and all have their entrances to the west - as does the Mukteśvara. Of the four temples, three are quite small, rising to a height of only about 4.5 metres. The third temple from the south is much larger, and is slightly less in height than that of the Mukteśvara. On the rāhā-pāga of this deul, just above the doorway, there is an elaborate kīrtimukha. The doorway is flanked by two dvārāpālas.

On the northern side of the Mukteśvara temple, within the recessed courtyard we find four more miniature temples (photo 19). Two of these temples are placed just north of the Mukteśvara's deul and the other two are placed along the northern edge of the recessed courtyard.

On the southern side of the enclosure wall there is a small enclosed well (photo 20). This well is locally known as the mārīchī-kūnda, and its water is famous for its curative properties i.e. to cure barrenness of women. The doorframe leading to this well is carved with three bands of scrollwork. In the lintel is a seated figure of Lakulīśa on a lotus pedestal. He is flanked by four disciples, two on each side, seated on lotus cushions arising from the central lotus pedestal of Lakulīśa. All the disciples are reading books and are facing inwards. The remaining area of the lintel is carved with figures of seated.

ascetics facing inwards to the central figure. Here Lakulīśa is seated with legs crossed and the lakūṭa or club beneath his left arm pit. The base of the two flanking pilasters which hold the lintel has two dvārapāla niches. They are filled by Gaṅgā and Yamunā - a rare occurrence to find two river goddesses serving the purpose of door guardians. This entire doorframe is again framed by a large projecting nāga pilaster on each side - the nāga on the right and the nāginī on the left pilaster.

On the back or on the eastern portion of the Muktesvara campus is a big, almost rectangular tank, which covers almost the entire stretch of the eastern enclosure wall. It measures about 41.5 metres in length and 8.8 metres in width. This tank is fed by a natural spring which flows continuously and an equal amount of water is discharged continuously, and this leaves the tank always clean.

The central position in the location is given to the Muktesvara deul, its jagamohana, the enclosure wall and the unique torana, all set within the recessed courtyard. All this really brings in an atmosphere of serenity which is essential for the setting of any temple.

THE TEMPLE

As in all the major temples of Orissa following the Orissan style of temple building, the Muktesvara temple has two basic units - the jagamohana or the mukhaśālā which is the forehall
or hall for the audience and then the deul which houses the Linga (photo 21). The jagamohana and the deul are separated by a wall which recedes inwards and thus preserving a sense of separation of the two units.

The Muktesvara temple, like all other early temples of Bhubaneswar does not rise to a great height. It has a modest height of 10.42 metres. The gandi gradually curves inwards from the baranda level, and when this technique is adopted, soaring heights cannot be effected.

Both the deul and the jagamohana rest on a low platform or pitha, similar in shape to that of the enclosure wall. This pitha has three set of mouldings. The upper two mouldings are designed in the shape of a khurā and the bottom moulding recedes inward to give the upper two mouldings a projecting look. The second moulding has some plain chaitya carvings at regular intervals superimposed on the top moulding. On the northern side, in the deul portion, there is a broken makara head which serves as an outlet for waste water from the garbhagṛha.

The ground plan (fig. 9) gives a general view of the proportion between the two structures i.e. the deul as against the jagamohana. Broadly speaking the jagamohana is twice as long as the deul. In the same way the proportion of the interior space between the two is 2:1.

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7. The Measurement of the temple was done by the use of a theodolite. Details of the theodolite is given in figure 8 and the mathematical calculation in Chapter 7.
THE DEUL

The deul like all standard Orissan temples, is divided into the bada, the gandi and the mastaka. On the bada of the deul is surmounted a tall curvilinear gandi. The gandi or sikhara gradually curves inwards from the baranda level. Each of the walls, excluding the western side - which is connected to the jagamohana, is articulated or designed in exactly the same manner, while the imagery placed around the temple on the lower rathas, the baranda and the heraldic bho panels, which are just below the kirtimukha, vary from side to side. And on the top is the mastaka.

BADA

The deul is pancha-ratha in plan and is about 4 square metres from corner to corner, while the interior of the deul or the garbhagṛha measures about 233 cms by 233 cms. The bada consists of the usual three divisions i.e. the pabhāga, the jāṅgha and the baranda. The pabhāga consists of four mouldings on the kanika-pāga and increases to five mouldings on the anuratha and the rāhā-pāga as on the Gaurī temple. In the early temples of Orissa there are usually three or four mouldings, while those of the later temples we find that the pabhāga mouldings are five. Thus, the Mukteśvara suggests a transitional phase of the pabhāga which integrates both the types. The lower most moulding, which is in the shape of a khurā is relieved
with elaborate chaitya-archs, housing either a face or a standing figure and at times are even empty. The kumbha is devoid of any carving except for the continuity of the elongated leaf design, connecting all the units of the pābhāga. The pāṭa is relieved with scroll work within beaded carving. The fourth moulding or the kani on the rāhā and anuratha is enriched with an elephant frieze while the top moulding or the vasanta again has scroll work carved on it. As for the kanika-pāga the top moulding or the fourth one is similar to the vasanta moulding of the rāhā or anuratha-pāga (photo 22). The tala-garbhikā design of the rāhā is fashioned as a khākharā-muṇḍi. It is tri-ratha in plan and has a niche at the base, which houses a standing figure. This khākharā-muṇḍi has five pīṭhā mouldings. The lower three mouldings are in the shape of the khurā while the fourth is in the shape of a lotus and the fifth moulding serves as the mastaka (photo 23).

The jāṅgha similarly has three vertical divisions - i.e. a central projection or rāhā flanked on each side by symmetrically formed projections - anuratha and kanika. Separating these three projections are two rathas which recede inwards from the central projection.

The rāhā consists of a central niche with two pilaster on either side, and a projecting eave on the top. Above the tala-garbhikā is the niche to house the pārśvadebatās and the niche is capped by an upara-garbhikā which is fashioned as
an elongated rekhā-muṇḍi. This rekhā-muṇḍi has seven mouldings and is beautifully carved. The lower three and the sixth moulding takes the shape of the khurā. The fourth moulding is in the shape of a rectangle while the fifth is in the shape of a lotus pedestal. The top moulding is a small amalaka design. These mouldings are relieved with scroll works and have beaded borders. The entire rekhā-muṇḍi is tri-ratha in design. On the rāhā projections of the first, second, third and sixth moulding there are seated human figures.

The outside pilasters are longer and narrower. Above their pābhāga mouldings, in the middle of each flanking pilaster is a female figure carved in high-relief before a background of scroll work with an overlaying kīrtimukha emitting beads of pearls. Above this the outer pilasters contain two khurā shape mouldings with projecting centres, capped by a similarly articulated stone incised with upwards pointing lotus petals. Above this is a square moulding just below the recessed kāṇṭhi. It is capped by a rounded kalaśa on the level of the kāṇṭhi.

The whole rāhā projects considerably, 61.5 cms on each side, from the wall surface. The side portions are identically carved as the front. A recessed wall extends behind it, connecting the projecting rāhā with the temple wall. It is plain, but like all connecting walls on the temple, is decorated with a vyāla figure (photo 24).

The inner pilasters have similar base mouldings as the outer pilasters. Above it they too have female figures, these
always being depictions of the river goddesses Gaṅgā on the left, and Yamunā on the right, identified by their makara and tortoise upon which they stand. Replacing the upper mouldings of the outer pilasters, the inner pilasters have female figures of the śālabhaṅjikā type. But here the females are musicians. Serving as an elaborate lintel above these pilasters and the top of the rāhā rekhā-muṇḍī is a stone course with an outwardly projecting centre, decorated with scroll work (photo 25).

Symmetrically flanking the rāhā are the anuratha and kanika-pāgas and a recess between the two having the nāga, nāginī pilasters. The anuratha-pāga is designed as an elongated khākharā-muṇḍī. The pābhāga supports two small pilasters, which flank a small niche. The two small pilasters are decorated with scroll work and an overlaying kīrtimukha topped by an atlantid - gana or yakṣa. The niche has an upara-garbhikā which is more elaborately designed than any other temple of the early period. It consists of three carved mouldings flushed with the flanking pilasters. These mouldings are capped by two outwardly projecting mouldings - the top one consisting of a miniature chaitya window housing a benign face. These projecting eaves crowning the niche, effectively separate the niche from the miniature khākharā-muṇḍī above it. The muṇḍī above the niche contains eleven pīḍhā mouldings. The lowest and the topmost mouldings are bigger. The rest of the mouldings are decorated with overlaying multiple chaitya - medallions with interlacing ribbons which unify the horizontal mouldings.
and create a beautiful tracery or imagery effect. This is the first use of such inter-lacing chaitya-medallion on the jāṅgha of a temple (photo 26).

The kanika-pāgas are beautifully articulated. They are longer, narrower and have an extra capping element. As already mentioned they have a four fold pābhāga, the upper two courses of which are spanned by a vertical relief of either a female figure or a standing ascetic. On top of the pābhāga is carved a female figure in high relief. These female figures are of the śālabhaṅjikā type. Their poses are gracefully chiselled out. Above the śālabhaṅjikā is a panel of scroll work with an overlaying kīrtimukha emitting pearls. They are topped by a square panel housing a squat atlantid - gāṇa or yakṣa. The kīrtimukha and the gāṇa panels are linked by a single moulding between them having an elongated leaf design on it (photo 26).

The recesses separating the kanika and the anuratha are similar to those of the Vārāhī and Tirtheśvara temples and they consist of the nāga, nāginī pilasters. These pilasters are much narrower than the other rathas (photo 27 and 28). The pābhāga division of these pilaster have six instead of five mouldings. The lowest moulding is in the shape of a khurā with a central chaitya arch. This moulding is topped by a plain kumbha moulding. Above this is a rectangular panel with a standing female figure. The bottom three mouldings
are all linked by an elongated leaf design. The vertical panel is topped by three more mouldings, the top being in the shape of the khurā with an elaborate chaitya arch with a central face in it. The pābhāga is surmounted by a panel in which there are two crouching elephants surmounted by two lions - gaja-simhās. The gaja-simhās form the base element of the rounded nāga, nāgini pilaster. The nāga is carved at the base of the pilaster with its tail coiling above, suggesting a descending movement. These nāga, nāgini are human figures with canopies of serpent hoods over their heads. The upper part of the body, upto the waist is human while the lower part is in the serpentine form. Each of them has a canopy of five serpent hoods over its head. This unusual combination of the human form with that of the serpent has given it a semi-divine status. The top portion of the nāga pilaster consists of a set of three mouldings which is repeated vertically above the horizontal barāṇḍa along the entire length of the corresponding place in the gaṇḍī. The lowest in the set of mouldings is a rectangular panel with a female figure. This pose is a standardized one. Here the female leans against a half open door with legs crossed. A bird is perched on top of the door (photo 29). Above this is a narrow moulding with a strip of beaded work and an animal carving on it. This moulding is capped by a double chaitya-medallion which is aligned with the lower moulding of the barāṇḍa - just below the recessed kāṇṭhi. The top chaitya-window is more elaborate than the lower one, but both have a central
niche which houses figures of ascetic and at times a male head is frontally placed, which gazes steadily from the window space.

It is in the Muktesvara temple that the nāga, nāginī pilasters were for the first time introduced as decorative elements on the programming of a temple’s relief in Bhubaneswar. These have been specifically used in the bāda of the temple and the jagamohana.

The west wall, on the side of the deul which connects the jagamohana, consists of two symmetrical sections of kanikas, the nāga pilasters and some portions of the anuratha. This side does not have the rāhā element - because of the junction with the jagamohana.

A brief description of the various sculptures on the bāda of the deul are attempted below.

Western Wall (northern side) - kanika figure & the recess between the kanika & anuratha

Here we see a śālabhāṇjikā and in the recess a nāginī pilaster. The music playing śālabhāṇjikā is finely detailed but badly mutilated. Most of the head is smashed away and only the elaborate headdress remains. She holds a flute in the playing posture and the tree flows sinuously around her head.

The nāginī figure, barely visible to normal eyes is badly damaged around the face and is fairly eroded. The nāginī holds a lotus in her right hand. The pilaster on which the nāginī
Northern Wall (right side of rāhā)
Kanika figure - Śālabhañjjikā

This figure is quite badly damaged. The head, right leg and both the hands are missing. On the panel the outlines of the now destroyed hands are still visible. Though the right leg is missing, broken fragments are still present and one can clearly make out that the right leg was bent near the knee and was resting on the left thigh held by the left hand. The figure has a necklace, an anklet on the left leg and a very meticulously carved out waist band. On the left side of the panel is a dwarf in a dancing posture, with its head now missing.

Northern Wall (right side of rāhā-recess
between kanika and anuratha)-Nāga (photo 30)

The sculpture is well preserved except that the face is badly damaged. The right hand of the nāga is broken and missing. The figure holds something near the waist which seems to be a crown. It has a beautiful necklace and an elaborate waist-band, which are all in a well preserved state. A beaded thread runs down from the left shoulder down towards the waist. The figure has a canopy of a five hooded snake. The rest of the pilaster is same as described earlier.
Northern Wall - rāhā (right lateral side of rāhā) Sālabhaṅjikā and Vyāla

The Sālabhaṅjikās head, hands, and left forearm are missing. Her arms are not raised high as is usual of such figures and from the outline, it is possible that she originally held a bird, a conventional posture seen is many of the temples. A mutilated dwarf figure sits to the right of the frame with legs crossed and hands folded.

The vyāla is of the conventional type, a male warrior on a leogryph rearing above a crouching elephant. This image is an unusual type - a combination of horse and lion. The animal here is seen emitting beaded pearls. The warrior holds the rein, which is tied to the mouth of the animal. The male figure is badly damaged. The reins are held by the left hand while the right hand is raised upwards and holds an unidentifiable object - probably a whip.

Northern Wall (right side of the central rāhā niche)-rāhā Sālabhaṅjikā and Yamunā (photo 31)

The Sālabhaṅjikā figure is eroded and damaged. Her left hand reaches towards the tree curving atop her head. The right hand fondles the head of a child standing to her right side. The left leg below the knee is partly broken. The figure has a necklace, waist-band and bangles - all in badly eroded state.
The river goddess stands to the right side of the now empty rāhā niche. She stands upon a tortoise, her vāhana. She stands in a leisurely pose, and her left hand rests on her left thigh. She has an elaborate hair style with hair ornaments, armlets, bangles, necklace and a waistband. Her face, right hand and the parasol above her head have been damaged. The figure on the left side of the panel, which holds the parasol is badly eroded.

Northern Wall - Rāhā figures (left and right top of the inner pilasters flanking the rāhā niche)

Here we see female musician figures flanking the niches upara-garbhikā. The figure to the left stands with the right knee bent and plays a long viṇā. Behind her to the left the branches of a tree spread out, though the tree trunk on the right is worn away. Details of carving here is fairly eroded. The figure to the right stands in a similar pose, with the left knee bent, thus creating a symmetrical composition. The bottom half of her viṇā is broken off. She is flanked by dwarf figures, the one on the left has been broken away (refer to photo 25).

Northern Wall (left side of the central rāhā niche)-rāhā Sālabhaṇjikā & Gaṅgā (photo 32)

The river goddess stands to the left side of the empty rāhā niche. She stands on a makara, her vāhana. Standing gracefully, she faces inwards, towards the empty niche. Her right hand rests on her right thigh and the left hand now broken
was placed upwards, reaching out for the parasol. Her hair is well fashioned with ornaments. She has an elaborate waist-band. There is a small figure behind her - on the left of the panel, holding the parasol. The figure is badly eroded. When one sees both the flanking river goddesses - Gaṅgā and Yamunā, one can visualise the symmetry of the panel. Both the figures face inwards, to grace the central niche which perhaps once housed a pārśvadevatā.

This sālabhañjikā posture is somewhat different. The figure is well preserved except for the face and some parts of the left hand which are broken. The figure takes the whole load of the body on her left leg, while the right leg is bent to rest on the tree behind her. Both the hands move upwards and hold the tree above her head. She wears a necklace and a waist-band. A small female figure stands on the left side of the panel and looks up at the sālabhañjikā.

Northern Wall - rāhā (left lateral side of rāhā) Female figure and Vyāla (photo 33)

Although the top of the head and the face of the female is broken away, the image retains its robustness of form and clarity of detail. The torso is shown frontally while the legs are in profile, with the right crossed over in front. She is framed by a tree, which is on the right side. From the tree a fantastic lotus grows and curves across to the left of the frame where it is held in the girls right hand. As one of
Mukteśvara's better preserved examples, it shows a complex rhythmical composition - interplay of crossed legs, curving hips, bending tree and undulating flower stalk.

This vyāla is in a well preserved state. Again this is the conventional type - a warrior on a leogryph rearing above a crouching elephant. The only difference here is that the male has been replaced by a female warrior. The sculpture shows the high quality of workmanship. All the gears used by horse riders are represented here - reins, foot rests, saddle etc. The figure holds an unidentifiable object on her right hand.

*Northern Wall (left side of rāhā - recess between kanika and anuratha) Nāginī*

The nāginī is well preserved, but for the damage to the face and the object held in the right hand. This nāginī figure is similar to the rest of the nāginī figures in the temple. On the left hand she holds a lotus stalk.

*Northern Wall (left side of rāhā) kanika figure - Sālabhañjikā (photo 34)*

The body is frontally placed with a delicate bend to the right. The face and both the forearms are completely broken. From the broken remains it can be seen that both the hands were holding on to the branches of the tree. On the left and right side of the panel are placed small figures. The left side is a female figure, while the right side figure is broken
from the waist upwards.

**Eastern Wall (right side of rāhā)**

*kanika figure - Sālabhaṇjikā*

The female figure is seen in multiple perspective, the crossed legs are in right profile, the torso is frontal and the head is in left three quarter profile. The face and lower limbs (hands) are broken off. She wears a cricular earring and the hair is fashioned in the shape of a bun and is ornamented by a beaded string. She has a simple girdle which looks like the folds of her clothing. She has a beaded string necklace held at the lower portion by a central clasp, from which start two separate strings which move below the breasts. A small *gana* stands to the left of the composition with both hands over its head holding an indistinct object. The slightly curving tree trunk, creating an arch over the girl's head echoes the linear rhythm of her body.

**Eastern Wall (right side of rāhā-recess**

*between kanika and anuratha) Nāga*

The nāga figure is playing a long necked musical instrument—difficult to identify because of erosion. The face of the nāga is completely broken. The hair style is somewhat different—they are placed in two rows of curls. The serpent hood placed over the nāgas head is placed more to the right losing its symmetry.
The **vyāla** is of the standard type. The workmanship is excellent. The vyāla is in a good state of preservation. On the body of the animal there is a string with bells hanging from it. The open mouth reveals a series of teeth. Unlike other vyālas this one doesn't emit festoons of pearls from its mouth - they seems to be tongue's of fire ? The warrior holds a weapon may be a *katarā* on its right hand while the reins are on the left hand.

The male figure stands in a right profile. The face is completely broken off. On its right hand it holds a long sword by the hilt. The left hand holds an unidentifiable object. In the girdle there is a small dagger tucked in very neatly over the right hip. A drapery flows down from behind its shoulder up to the waist. The male figure is flanked by two gaṇas. The left gaṇa raises its left hand towards the central figure while the right hand is held over the chest. The right gaṇa does just the reverse and both together give a symmetrical effect.

The **śālabhaṇjikā** stands in a very graceful posture. The head is completely broken away. What remains in the top is her hair style - which is tied in a circular fashion with a thin ornamented string. On the left hand she holds an
unidentifiable object, while the right hand fondles a child. The child figure is broken and eroded.

To the left of this image, adjacent to the empty rāhā niche is Yamunā standing on a highly eroded tortoise - her vāhana. The face and the right arm are badly damaged. The hair styling is quite elaborate. She adorns a head ornament just over the forehead, which move off from the centre to the sides in semi-circular patterns. Her left hand rests on her left thigh. The girdle is more fashionable than the others. On the right side of the panel is a small figure, now almost completely eroded, which holds the stem of the parasol.

Eastern Wall - Rāhā figures (left and right top of the inner pilaster flanking the rāhā niche)

Here are two female figures similarly carved to create a symmetrical composition. The tree forms a kind of frame, with the branches curving over the heads of the figures. The figures are slightly damaged, mainly at the faces and the hands.

Eastern Wall (left side of the central rāhā niche) - rāhā Gaṅgā and Śālabhaṇjikā

Gaṅgā is accompanied by a dwarf, who holds the stem of the parasol which is mostly broken off, above her head. The upper torso is well preserved, while the head and left arm are almost completely broken away. The right thigh is also broken.
This *śālabhaṅjikā* figure is similar in execution and pose to the one seen in the *kanika-pāga* of this eastern side. The perspective of the figure is, crossed legs in a right profile, the torso is frontally placed and the head is in three quarter profile. The figure embraces the tree with her left arm, the branches of which move in a curve over her head. The face and the right arm are mostly broken off.

**Eastern Wall - rāhā (left lateral side of rāhā) Śālabhaṅjikā and Vyāla**

The girl stands in a frontal posture. The left leg is bent and rests on the tree. She holds the tree with her left hand while the right hand holds, what looks like a flower basket. There is a small dwarf on the left of the panel and it is trying to reach out for the basket.

The *vyāla* is of the traditional type, a warrior on a leogryph rearing above an crouching elephant. This embellishment seems to be carved in all connecting walls of the deul.

**Eastern Wall (left side of rāhā-recess between kanika and anuratha) Nāgini (photo 36)**

This relief is in a well preserved state, but for some damage to the face. The figure has been very well ornamented. She has one necklace tightly wound on her neck. Another necklace with three strings curves over her breasts, the lowest string of which form into a knot between her breasts and from there two separate strings move to the sides just below her breast.
and another two go down and are clasped with the girdle. The girdle has a number of small loops hanging down, which enhance the beauty of the image and its ornamentation. One of the five serpent hoods of the canopy is broken. She holds a lotus stalk with both the hands, the left hand holding the lower portion of the stalk while the right holds the stalk just below the flower.

**Eastern Wall (left side of rāhā) kanika figure - Sālabhañjikā** (photo 37)

Here the posture is very interesting. The figure stands in a crossed leg posture, with the hip almost turned three-quarter. Both the sides below the waist are carved in such a manner that only the rear is seen. A small figure is placed to the left of the composition.

**Southern Wall - (right side of rāhā) kanika figure-Sālabhañjikā**

The female figure stands with legs crossed, the forwarded left leg is turned to the side, while the right leg is rendered frontally creating a dance-like pose. The upper body is shown frontally. The right hand reaches out for the tree and the left hand rests just below her left breast. The bending tree compliments the linear outlines of the figure. The breast and face are broken off.
Southern Wall (right side of rāhā – recess between kanika and anuratha) Nāga

In its presentation, the nāga pilaster is similar in form with the rest of the nāga pilasters seen in the temple. It holds an open garland with both the hands. The face is completely broken off. Excepting this, the rest of the panel is in good shape.

Southern Wall – rāhā (right lateral side of rāhā) Vyāla and Male figure (photo 38)

The vyāla is again of the traditional type, with similar type of embellishment. The only difference is the warrior-represented here by a female.

The male figure is in a better state of preservation. The head is broken off. The right hand is in the blessing posture or the varada-mudrā while in the left hand he holds a small piece of object.

Southern Wall (right side of the central niche) – rāhā Śālabhaṅjikā and Yamunā (photo 39)

The śālabhaṅjikā figure is quite badly damaged. The entire tree is broken and eroded off. The face, left shoulder and hands are broken. She holds what seems to be a bunch of flowers with both her hands.

Yamunā stands in the same posture as the ones seen in the eastern and northern walls. The face and the right hand is completely broken off. Besides the figure which holds the parasol, there is another figure to the left of the panel.
Southern Wall - Rāhā figures (left and right top of the inner pilasters flanking the rāhā niche)

The flanking śālabhaṅjikās are of similar type as those seen on the northern and eastern walls. Here too they create a symmetrical impression.

Southern Wall (left side of the central rāhā niche) - rāhā Gaṅgā and Śālabhaṅjikā

The Gaṅgā panel is badly broken and eroded. The face is damaged. The panel has two small figures, the left one holds the parasol while the right one just stands.

The śālabhaṅjikā embraces the tree from behind with her left hand. The right hand which is broken was holding the tree which curves over her head and flows down on her right side.

Southern Wall - rāhā (left lateral side of rāhā) Śālabhaṅjikā and Vyāla

The face of the śālabhaṅjikā is eroded. The body is frontally placed with the right leg placed over the left. Her left hand is placed over the right thigh, in which she holds beaded strings that hang downwards from her girdle. On the left of the panel is a small figure (monkey) which is trying to pull this beaded string. The right hand holds the tree above her head.

The vyāla is of the same type. But here the crouching elephant is reversed i.e. it faces the lion.
Southern Wall (left side of rāhā - recess between kanika and anuratha) Nāginī (photo 40)

The nāginī pilaster is similar in form and carving like the rest we see in the temple. It holds a lotus on the right hand and probably a kalaśā on the left. The hairstyle is different from the other nāginīs. It is placed over the head and is held by a double stranded beaded chain. The ornamentations are quite elaborate.

Southern Wall (left side of rāhā) kanika figure - Śālabhañjikā (photo 41)

This figure is placed facing the east. The face and the small figure placed on the right of the panel are broken. The hair styling has been done with great care and delicacy. It is placed behind the head and is beautifully ornamented. The left hand holds an unidentifiable object. The right hand holds a katarā, which is a fashionable one. A circular object is placed on top of it. It is either a ball or the head of the figure standing in front of it, whose body above the waist is missing.

Western Wall (southern side) kanika figure and the recess between the kanika and anuratha (photo 42)

Here we see a Śālabhāñjikā and in the recess a nāga pilaster. This female figure is very difficult to be photographed. She lifts her right foot to her left hand. Below the right leg is a small figure of an ascetic supporting the lifted leg. The
ascetic has a basket or bundle hanging on to his right shoulder. The figure represents the standard poetic female type nāyikā—removing a thorn from her foot.

The nāga figure is one of the most beautiful and well preserved on the temple. He holds a lotus in his left hand and in the right hand the thick stalk of a creeper. The figure is full and robust, and his jewellery, as they flow along the form, emphasise its volume.

The barandha consists of a recess and a base moulding which runs around the deul and effectively separates the bada from the gandi. The recess and the moulding are relieved with various scenes housed in shallow niches and also in high relief of the pāga divisions. These include Śivalinga-pūjā, ascetics counting the beads of their rosary, dancing ascetics, and figures carrying jars on poles. In the recess above the rāhā are bhararaksakas, flanking a central panel housing a female figure. The area above the nāga, nāgini pilasters in the recess is decorated with pairs of elephants facing each other with their trunks inter-locked.

Northern side - (right of centre) kanika recess - Liṅga Worship ( photo 43 )

A male figure in a combined squatting and kneeling position holds an offering, flowers or food, above a liṅga-pītha. In the upper left corner is a flying vidyādhara figure. In the upper right corner is a kind of lotus disk, in its corner placement only one quarter of it is visible.
Kanika recess base moulding

Here is a male figure seated in a kneeling position, looking at himself in a mirror. He holds the mirror in the left hand while the right hand touches his beards.

Northern side (right of centre) Anuratha recess - Guru with disciples (Photo 44)

The teacher, his legs secured with a *yogapatta* is flanked by two disciples. All three figures are seated on *piḍhās*. The left figure is reading from a book. The figure on the right is slightly damaged and its gestures are not very clear.

Anuratha recess base moulding-Guru with disciple

Both the teacher and the disciple are seated in *piḍhās*. The guru is reading from a book. His right hand is on the cross-legged table. He has a beard and thick matted hair. Both the figures are emaciated. Both sit facing each other in similar manners i.e. squatting posture, with one knee raised up. On his left arm the disciple holds a manuscript. The right hand rests on the raised knee.

Rāhā recesses

The rāhā recess has four *gaṇas* - featured in such a manner, that they seem to be supporting the entire load of the *gandi*. All the four *gaṇas* are carved inside small square niches. The central part of the rāhā recess projects slightly
and has a niche, which houses a śālabhañjikā, in its normal standing posture. This panel is repeated on all the three sides.

**Northern side (left of centre) Kanika recess, Liṅga Worship**

Originally the panel had two figures. Presently there is just one figure, while the broken outline of the other along with both the legs are present. The figure which is present sits in a squatting posture with one knee raised up.

**Kanika recess base moulding—A Dancing figure**

The figure is badly eroded and it is extremely difficult to say whether it is a male or female figure. The figure here is in a dancing posture.

**Northern side—(left of centre) Anuratha recess—A Guru (photo 45)**

A guru sits facing one of his disciples. The teacher seems to be reading from a manuscript. Both the figures are emaciated with pilled up matted hair. The guru also has a beard. A small cross-legged table is placed between the figures.

**Anuratha recess-base moulding**

Here is a badly eroded side profile of a lady playing a musical instrument. She sways her body rhythmically as she plays the drums.
Eastern side - (right of centre) kanika recess Linga Worship (photo 46)

In this panel is a single figure standing to the left of a linga in a high pitha. He holds a lotus, which he is perhaps placing as an offering. A lotus disk is placed on the top right corner of the panel and is not fully visible because of its corner placement.

Kanika recess base moulding - Family scene (photo 47)

A man having an implement (unidentifiable) on his shoulder faces a women holding a baby. Another child stands to the left and a small pot bellied, dwarf like figure sits to the right.

Eastern side (right of centre)
Anuratha recess (photo 48)

Three figures, two standing, one squatting, worship not a linga but at an altar consisting of a low table piled with three tiered layers resembling folds of cloth. On top of this is placed a long oval shape item. It perhaps shows fire, but has no surface details to suggest this. The whole thing is indistinct.

Anuratha recess - base moulding

In this panel we see two figures - one male and the other, a female. It looks as if the female is leading the way and the male is following. The male figure is an emaciated
ascetic with exposed ribs and a sunken belly. He has matted hairs and a long beard and holds an object in his right side which is indistinct.

**Eastern side (left of centre) Anuratha recess**

A procession of four men carrying bundles attached to poles are seen here. The front two figures carry the load over their shoulders. The third figure carries the load in one hand while in the other hand holds the stick - suggesting that the stick is being used as a support while walking. The last figure seems to be resting his head on the front persons shoulder.

**Anuratha recess base moulding**

Here we seen a woman with an ascetic. The two figures sit on low *pīṭha* with a small cross-legged table between them. The ascetic sits in a comfortable position with hands in an explanatory gesture.

**Eastern side (left of centre) kanika recess ( photo 49 )**

Two standing male figures flank a *liṅga* on a low *pīṭha*. One figure holds two small water pots or *kumbhas*, while the second figure is about to pour water on top of the *liṅga* - jalabhisheka.
**Kanika recess base moulding**

In this panel we see a yogi. The slightly emaciated figure sits on a low table, one leg bent and placed in a vertical position. He appears to be reading a book.

**Southern side (right of centre) kanika recess - Liṅga Worship ( photo 50 )**

Two ascetic figures flank a large liṅga-pīṭha. The left side figure is emaciated, with a beard and matted hairs. He holds a long object which is quite indistinct - it perhaps could be a container of incense, while the figure on the right is holding a bell.

**Kanika recess base moulding - Guru with disciple**

The emaciated teacher sits on a low table. He holds an indistinct object in his left hand. The teacher has a beard and the hair is matted. The disciple sits before him with hands reverently folded.

**Southern side (right of centre) Anuratha recess - Caravan scence ( photo 51 )**

Here we see four male figures in a procession similar to the one on the eastern wall. The front two figures, together are carrying a basket. One of the figures bends down while carrying the load - signifying the weight of the basket. The third figure, a robust one, carries on his shoulders two baskets tied to either ends of a pole.
Anuratha recess base moulding - Guru with disciple

The two figures sit between a cross-legged table. The disciple is reading from a book which lies on the table. The right hand is on the table and the left hand on the ground. The guru's figure is highly emaciated one. He sits on a yoga-pattā. His hair is matted and the beard is long, and holds a book (questionable - can also be identified as a rosary or a garland) with both hands.

Southern side (left of centre) Anuratha recess - Dancing scene (photo 52)

An emaciated ascetic with wild, matted hair dances. In his right hand he perhaps holds a rattler. He is flanked by musicians. On the right are two figures. The extreme right figure is a dancing drummer. Close to him stands another figure playing the flute. To the extreme left is a bearded drummer standing in a dancing position. Close to him is seen a very small figure on a semi-sitting posture, with a drum on the ground.

Anuratha recess base moulding - Guru with disciple

Here again we see exactly the same carvings which one sees on the anuratha recess base moulding (right of centre) on the same side.

Kanika recess base moulding - Guru with disciple

This is again a repetition of the corresponding panel, to the right of centre of the same side.
As already said, all the three sides of the deul on the baranda level of the rāhā-pāga, one sees common features—four gaṇas and a central śālabhaṇjikā (photo 53). Similarly, the recess between the anuratha and kanika on the baranda level has common carvings throughout (photo 54). Here we see two elephants engaged in a tussle with trunks inter-locked.

GANDI

As already mentioned the baranda consists of a recess with a base moulding which runs without any hinderances around the deul and effectively separates the bāḍa from the gandi. Like the bāḍa, the gandi has been must successfully and effectively treated. The pāgas of the gandi have been properly aligned with those of the bāḍa.

The gandi is pañcha-ratha in plan, with the pāgas continuing the vertical alignment of the bāḍa to display a fluid vertical thrust lacking in earlier temples at Bhubaneshwar (photo 55,56,57). Except for the kīrtimukha or bho type vajra-mastaka of the western rāhā, which is unfinished, the decoration and articulation of the Mukteśvara's śikhara is identical on all four sides. Its seven vertical division are aligned with and match in their degree of outward projections to those of the walls below. A broad central rāhā is flanked by anurathas. The next horizontal elements are the narrow recesses and finally the kanikas. The outline of the tower has a gradual inward curve, which becomes most pronounced at the summit. Here
the gaṇḍī is terminated by a continuous stone course of a modified cruciform shape, having slight outward projections over the rāhā and anuratha.

Rāhā-पāga

Above the bho motif, the rāhā consists of a wide panel carved with a continuous chaitya net as can be seen from photo 56. A row of five individual chaitya windows, carved in the same relief technique as those on both the lower and upper anuratha is repeated without variation. The effect of these windows on the rāhā-पāga is somewhat different from those on the flanking pāgas (photo 58). The heraldic bho or kirtimukha dominates the entire composition of the rāhā-पāga. It rests upon a series of five horizontal courses, the central portion of which projects outwards. The two lower courses are of a continuous khurā shape (photo 59, 60) with the lower ridge decorated with scroll work. The upper ridges, on the front sides, bears figures of animal or squating ascetics, similar to the figures on the upper element of the lower pāgas. The upper two courses are narrower, one consisting of a band of scroll work, the other having the shape of a lotus pedestal and decorated with incised upward pointing lotus petals.

The lowest part of the kirtimukha consists of a narrow relief frieze. The side portions contain animal hunting scenes, while the central projecting portion depict seated male figures.
surrounded by attendants. These scenes seem to represent not scenes of gurus giving discourse, as is usually thought but rather royal figures.

Above this central scene is a small chaitya window, which houses an outward gazing male head (except on the north which has a miniature Naṭarāja figure). The upper portion of the kūrtimukha is completely contained within the rāhā-pāga. The centre of the huge chaitya window has a rondel having lotus medallion, superimposed by the window containing the face. A round border of bead work surrounds the lotus. Surrounding this are four figures of flying celestials, holding thick creepers. These figures are surrounded by a more elaborate border consisting of three bands, which comes to a point at the top centre. This central part remains slightly open, allowing the entrance of a chain, the bell at its end being situated between the upper two flying figures (photo 59, 60). The chain seems to have originated from the mouth of a high relief kūrtimukha head, at the top centre point of the whole composition.

Along the outer edges of the window shape, are vegetal scroll motifs. The top two motifs are round. They flank the pointed area of the window arch. The lower motifs form the ends of a kind of scroll arabesque, and are highly elaborate versions of the decorative flanking elements of all the other chaitya windows on the temple.
Flanking the whole central motifs are two dwarf figures. Short and stocky, they stand with one foot upon each of the arabesques just described. They hold the end of a chain, which is draped across the upper portion of the central window. The dwarfs wear arm bands, bracelets, torques and large round earrings. Their faces are framed by tightly curled beards with teeth bared and eyes bulging. Their hair is arranged in two rows of tight curls. At the centre of their forehead they wear a single cobra head.

On the western side of the gāndī or śikhara above the juncture between the jagamohana and deul, the chaitya window or the bho has been left unfinished. The kīrtimukha head and the two flanking dwarfs have been fully carved (photo 61).

On the northern rāhā-pāga, the central panel in the chaitya window houses a Naṭarāja image depicting a male figure flanked by two females (photo 58).

On the eastern wall the bho is of the similar type as described earlier. The head within the chaitya window is worn out. The flanking reliefs on all the sides show elephants. Here on the east, it has three on each side, they move away from the centre in opposite direction. There are trees between the elephants (photo 62).

On the south the head inside the window bears a half smile. The scene below shows a seated male figure with three
attendants (photo 59). The main figure sits on the ground and holds an object, possibly a sword, in his right hand. Though not carved with great details, various pieces of jewellery are evident — necklace, arm bands and bracelets. One figure squats before him while behind him stand two males, one holding a spear with a banner attached to it.

The flanking figures vividly depict hunting scenes. On the right side a hunter bending on one knee wounds a deer with an arrow. On the left side we also see scenes of hunting.

**Nāṭarāja images on the Rāhā-pāga**

Just above the bho pattern, is placed on all four sides, a high relief image of Śiva as Nāṭarāja — Lord of Dance (photo 63). All four images are iconographically similar, and follow the traditional type of Nāṭarāja seen in the earliest temples of Orissa.

The north (photo 63) figure has a tall crown of matted hair, wears many ornaments and is ithyphallic. He has eight arms. His upper right and left hands hold a snake above the head. The lower hands carry a damarū (right) and a triśūla (left). The two remaining right arms are in the kari-hastamudrā and varadamudrā. The rest two left hands are in abhayamudrā and varadamudrā.

The east and south Nāṭarāja figure are similar to the north. They too carry similar objects in their hands. It is the western figure which is broken. Its lower two arms are
broken. Originally this figure was six armed. It also holds the serpent with the two upper hands. The lower right was in kari-hastamudrā and another right hand holds a damarū. The remains of a left arm carries a triśūla. A small Nandī lifts its head between Śīva's legs.

The anuratha of the śikhara or gaṇḍi has continuous chaitya patterns similar to those on the bāda. Each horizontal course has three motifs (photo 55 and 56).

The recess between the anuratha and kanika-pāga carry units of repeated imagery, which begin on the upper levels of the nāga and nāginī pilasters on the bāda. Upon a simple double moulding is placed a relief depicting a girl at a door. She stands in a tribhaṅga pose and has a parrot perched on top of the door. Above this is a simple khurā moulding decorated with a low relief animal carving. Next is a chaitya window containing either a male head or a lotus medallion. This sequence of image is repeated along the entire recess.

The kanikas are divided into five bhūmi division by bhūmi-amālās. Each bhūmi consists of four bhūmi-barāṇdis. In each set the four mouldings are identical in shape, resembling squat khurā mouldings with their lower ridges decorated with scroll work. Their upper portion carry imagery which is repeated continuously up the entire length of the gaṇḍi. The lowest course has a simple chaitya window, often empty or has a very
small face. The second course has a larger window in which we see a seated ascetic each giving a different gesture, either cross legged with folded hands, half squatting with folded hands or in the seated posture with yogapatta. The third course also has a window, which houses either a male face or a lotus medallion or a dancing figure (quite likely Gaṇeśa), or even a gaṇa figure. The fourth course bears a simply carved leaf design. Above this course is a miniature amalaka stone, which serves as a dividing element to the sets of moulding (figure 11).

**MASTAKA**

Above the gaṇḍi is a round stone course smaller in circumference than the lower course. This is the beki of the gaṇḍi. Above this is the amalaka or a cushion shaped circular stone course, and is articulated with a continuous pattern of vertical ribs. Its topmost portion is a low dome-like stone layer, and this layer locally is known as the khapuri. At this summit is an amṛṭa-kalaśa, jar of the nectar of immortality which is however a modern replacement. Over this is the triśūla-trident, emblem of Śiva also a later replacement (figure 10 Northern Elevation).

**Entrance to the Sanctum or garbhagrha**

The entrance to the garbhagrha is elaborately decorated as that of the jagamohana. Entry to the sanctum is gained by a low undecorated semi-circular stepping stone, which is flanked by two high relief figures of crouching lions.
The bases of the doorframe are flanked by two dvarapālas with female attendants. The male figures are four armed and hold the trident and another indistinct object. They are enclosed within a rectangle, bordered with bead works. The chaurai-bearing female figures are on the outer edges of the doorframe.

The lintel has a large plaque representing Gaja-lakṣmi. The goddess sits on an elaborate lotus pedestal with legs crossed rather than in lalitāsana as in the images carved on the jagamohana central window. She is flanked by two small female chaurai bearers, and above them are two elephants on lotus bases offering their lustrations to the goddess. The space above this recessed lintel contains a relief figure of the Navagrahas. The figures are housed within shallow niches flanked by pilasters growing out of pots and surmounted by, very simple two leveled miniature śikharas capped by amalakas. The ninth planet ketu has a canopy of a three headed snake while Rāhu is shown as a large head.