CHAPTER VIII

ART AND ARCHITECTURE
The South Indian campaign of Samudragupta was instrumental in spreading the cultural trends of the 'Classical Age', whose ramifications can be seen in the art and architecture of ancient Orissa.

**TEMPLE**

The rise to power of the Imperial Guptas in the first quarter of the 4th century A.D. marked the efflorescence of Brahmanical religion and the consequent accompaniment of temple building and sculpture producing activity.

Seldom in the history of peoples do we find a period in which the national genius is so fully and typically expressed in all the arts as the Gupta India".1

The Gupta period is described as the Classical Age and its decisive innovation was the Hindu temple2. The early temples built by the Guptas consisted of a flat-roofed shrine built on a square ground plan with a pillared portico in front of it. The interior is severely plain and the doorway of the sanctum is an expanded one and is richly carved with the figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā adoring its upper angles. The

pillar is characterized by a square pedestal, a many-sided shaft and a vase capital. These architectural features are found in all the early temples of the Guptas at places like Sanchi, Tigawa, Bhumra, and Nachna. Apart from the temples of stone, a brick temple with a north Indian tower belonging to the Gupta period datable to 5th century A.D. is found at Bhitargaon. The vertical effect of its tower is well balanced by the tiers of ornamental chaityas in horizontal courses. The plan in square and the walls are decorated with terracotta panels. The culmination of the Gupta style was reached in the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogarh which was built probably in the first half of the 6th century A.D. Here, it appears, the Gupta artists fairly succeeded in evolving a full-fledged temple as a result of the experience which they derived from the experimentation in building the earlier temples. Standing on a high terrace, and with a pillared portico projecting from each of the four sides of the sanctum, the Deogarh temple is "one of the most ornate and beautifully composed examples of the Gupta architecture". Instead of the flat-roof of the earlier Gupta temples, the builders raised a curvilinear tower terminating in an āmalaka. In the vertical elevation

the tower carried a central band on all four sides. Scholars described this tower as the typical example of north Indian and Nāgara style of temple architecture.

Temple, as one of the most important architectural features of the Gupta Art, was started in Kaliṅga and South-Kosala a few years after its origin and development in the Gupta empire. But the Orissan temple architecture, by reason of its own distinct individualities and long history of evolution, acquired for itself a distinct nomenclature, viz, the Kaliṅga. R.D. Banarjee has drawn our attention to an inscription of the Pre-Muslim period in the temple of Amrīṭeśvara at Holal in the Bellary district, in which mention has been made of four classes of temples, Nāgara, Kaliṅga, Drāvida, and Vesara. However, Gupta characteristics are often found in the temple architecture of Orissa in the early stage of its evolution.

BHIMA DEULA

One of the most sacred religious sites in Orissa is Mount Mahendra situated in the extreme south of Ganjam district. The architectural remains found on the top of Mahendragiri are interesting. Mahendragiri was one of the seven Kulagiri of the Puranic lore, and it occupied a significant place in the cultural history of Orissa. On the summit of the mountain there is the temple Gokarnesvara which marked the beginning of temple architecture in Orissa. The temple, popularly known as Bhima Deula (fig.1), is no other than the temple of Gokarnesvara mentioned in the early Ganga inscription. The inscriptions indicate that the deity Gokarneswara Siva installed on the summit of Mahendragiri was worshipped by Pulindasena sometime in the middle of the 6th century A.D. This is the earliest known temple of Orissa. It appears to have been constructed in the post-Gupta period.

When compared with the temple of Tigawa the Bhima Deula

Donaldson says about the temple, "Even the Gokarnesvara (kunti) temple appears to have been constructed from stones belonging to an early temple" Hindu Temples of Orissa, vol.I, p.67ff.


8B. Pulindasena the Chief of the Pulindas, one of the aboriginal tribes, according to the Sailodbhava charters dwelt in Mahendragiri. (The Ocean of Story (1924), vol.I, pp.102-136).


10. Majumdar, R.C. and Altekar, Vakataka Gupta Age, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, p.262.
a more developed style. Though a square sanctum it has a squat Śikhara formed by one small flat roof over a big flat roof. It is made of five huge blocks of stone, each stone being almost square in size. Each flat and square shaped stone is set up in such a way that it takes the form of a Śikhara temple. The temple is an improvement of the simple flat-roofed one of the early Gupta period. The low and squat tower appears here without assuming any great height. The low tower is also formed, as it were, by the rise of one flat roof over the other. The doorway of the temple is narrow and the walls are without niches. Upon the last tier is the Āmalaka stone. The Kalaśa is conspicuous by its absence. Except a few carvings in the form of straight lines to be noticed at the projections, there is no sculpture anywhere in the temple. Unlike the Rathas of Māmallapuram, which are assigned to the seventh century A.D., in the squat tower of Bhima Deula there is no conical decoration. In view of these stylistic considerations the temple may be placed in the period between the early Gupta temples and the Rathas of Māmallapuram, i.e., early sixth century A.D.

LAKSMANEŚVARA, BHARATEŚVARA, AND ŚATRUGHNEŚVARA TEMPLES:

In the sixth and early seventh centuries A.D. a considerable progress was witnessed in the cultural history of Orissa. It is during this period that the Orissan temple first emerged\(^{12}\), the earliest extant examples of which are at Bhubaneswar. Despite the ravages caused by man and nature, the Orissan temple evolved into a peculiar type apart from other architectural styles with little apparent external influence\(^{13}\).

The earliest extant temples of Bhubaneswar are the three ruined temples grouped in a line and enclosed within a loosely constructed wall composed of debris and fallen sculptures. All the three temples face west and are situated near the later temple of Rāmeśvara. The region around these shrines has a far greater antiquity as we know from the presence of a huge bell-capital of the Aśokan style in the tank, known as Aśoka Jhara, behind the Rāmeśvara temple. The plinth of the Rāmeśvara is made up of stones from an earlier temple which most likely stood on this spot. The sanctity of this site is still celebrated today by a festive visit once a year on the day of Aśokāśami in the month of Caitra.

\(^{12}\) Thomas Donaldson, Hindu Temples of Orissa, p.29ff.
\(^{13}\) ibid, pp.29-30.
These three extant early temples, known locally from north to south as Laksmaṇeśvara (fig.2), Bharateśvara (fig.3), and Śatrughneśvara (fig.4) are squat temple structures of the rekhā order in which the sanctums are surmounted by curvilinear spires. The northern-most temple of the group, the Laksmaṇeśvara, provides epigraphical evidences on its southern cave, originally attached to the niche, but now housed in the Orissa State Museum. The inscription consists of the names of planets which enables us to date the temple to the 6th century A.D. Only the core of the original spire and gandi remains, now practically reconstructed, with the corbelled arch above the doorframe revealed as a chasm. The tower above the roof of the garbha-griha (cella) is a hollow pyramid tapering upwards to form a solid block at the top. The inner face of the core is smooth whereas the outer face, before reconstruction, showed indentations which, together with iron clamps, were used for interlocking the sculptured stone forming the outer face of the temple. The existence of a jagamohana is evident by the remains of a rectangular plinth. A single pillar, found lying inside the sanctum, suggests it was a


16. ibid, p.148.
pillared hall like the *jagamohana* of the *Paraśuramesvara* though the pillars were octagonal in shape with lotus design at the intervals and lotus capital at the top. It is very difficult to know the decorative programme of the structure. The most interesting sculptures still adhering to the *bāda* of the temple are the rectangular projecting blocks, resembling wooden beam ends and decorated primarily with animal motifs. This forms a lower string course just above the *pābhāga* mouldings on the projecting subsidiary *pāgas* and the portal jambs which are decorated with *dvārapāla* and ornamental scroll motifs. A *mithuna* is carved at the base of the jambs (rāhā niche) on the east or back side which detached image of Surya rests above the *pābhāga* mouldings. A detached lintel, carved with ornate scroll work, lies on the ground near the rāhā niche on the north side.

The middle temple of the group, the Bharateśvara, has even less sculpture remaining on its walls than the *Laksmaṇesvara*. The only sculpture of importance appears on the western portal where the jambs are decorated with ornate scroll work and *dvārapālas*. The lintel above the doorway is decorated with a frieze depicting the capture of wild elephants, a popular motif of the early temples of Orissa.

18. ibid, p.32.
The southern-most temple of the group, i.e. Śatrughneśvara, is almost intact though greatly restored with modern materials, and gives us some idea of the original decorative programme of these earliest temples.

In these early examples at Bhubaneswara both animal and human motifs intermingle whereas in the later temples they become standardized with only elephants and lions represented. The motif itself most likely derives from the dentil cornice appearing on the architrave of the early Gupta temples and Buddhist caves, carved with lions' heads at Deogarh, Marhia and in the shape of Kirthimukha mash at Ajantā\(^19\).

The Śatrughneśvara represents a Śikhara temple and its shape, as available now, and the few sculptures that have been recovered, supply affinities with those of the Daśāvatāra temple assigned to the sixth century A.D.\(^20\) The sculptures of the Śatrughneśvara are marked by the vigour and exuberance of the designs recalling the best characteristics of the Post-Gupta art\(^21\). It had a jagamohana of which the rectangular plinth still exists. It seems to have been a pillared hall like the porch of the Paraśurameśvara. The

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only pillar that had some-how escaped destruction, was lying inside this ruined temple and has now found a place in the Orissa State Museum. The shape and designs of the pillars of the Šatrughneśvara resemble those of the Śiva temple at Bhumara.22

The next temple, chronologically, is the Svarṇajāleśvara (fig.5) situated some fifty metres south of the Paraśurameśvara temple. Stylistically it forms an intermediate link between the earlier Šatrughneśvara and the slightly later Paraśurameśvara shrines. All these three temples are tri-ratha in ground plan and have a similar decorative arrangement of pābhāga, jāṅgha, bārandā and gandī. Close scrutiny, however, reveals many subtle differences in decorative motifs as well as figure and facial types which enable us to place the structure to a little later period.

These temples belong to a period of transition from the Gupta style to the more developed and decorated śikharā type of the early medieval period23. In this period of transition, (as in language and script, so also in art and architecture) a tendency towards ornamentation may be noticed.

24. ibid.
In the sculptures of the Satrughneśvara group of temples we notice ornaments like necklace, armlet, udarabandha, earrings on the body. But ornaments were by that time not added to the waist and thigh, which was a peculiarity in the last quarter of the eighth century A.D.

TEMPLES OF MUKHALINGAM:

Percy Brown suggests that the temples of Mukhalīngam were anterior to the temples of Bhubaneswar and the architectural practices of the Orissan craftsmen were derived from the Chālukyan territory in Mysore through Mukhalīngam. A careful examination of Mukhalīngam temples, however, reveals that the direction of flow of traditions was from north to South and not vice versa. This can be corroborated from a close connection which existed between Orissa and the Mukhalīngam region in the development of local culture. There were political contacts between the Eastern Gaṅgas of Kaliṅga and the Eastern Chālukyas of coastal Andhra from the 6th century A.D. and onwards; and these contacts facilitated cultural intercourse between the two regions. In temple architecture, both the Eastern Gaṅgas and the Eastern Chalukyan examples betray some common features.

26. Masthanaiah, B. Temples of Mukhalīngam, p.27ff.
27. ibid.
The Eastern Gāṅgas worshipped Gokarnaśvāmi of Mahendra Mountain which is situated to the north of Mukhalingam on the southern boarder of Orissa. In a similar fashion religious ideas connected with Śaivism must have flowed South from Orissa since by that time Śaivism replaced Buddhism as the dominating religion in that region. The Pāsupata Śaivism, which had its origin in Western India, reached Mukhalingam via Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. Just as the religious ideas were transmitted into this region, the constructional practices, which were current in Orissa, found their way into Mukhalingam. In the shape of the base mouldings, in the arrangement of the niches on the wall portion and in the shape of the śikhara, (apart from the other features) the Mukhalingam temples are strikingly similar to their Orissan counterparts and form the southernmost limit of Orissan style of temple architecture.

The Paraśurameśvara temple at Bhubaneswar, of the Orissan temples, was built in the middle of the 7th century A.D. It is a small temple with a curvilinear tower.

29. ibid.
30. ibid.
31. K.C. Panigrahi takes Śatrughneśvara to be the earliest temple and assigns it cir.575 A.D. According to him, the Paraśuramesvara was built in cir.650 A.D. (Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar, pp.146-149). Percy Brown assigns cir.750 A.D. as the probable date of construction of the Paraśuramesvara which he considers to be the earliest. (Indian Architecture, Buddhist and Hindu periods, p.102).
over its sanctum and with a rectangular Jagamohana in front of it. The architectural features and the plastic art of the Paraśurameśvara and the later Vaital deula had greatly influenced the building style of the temples at Mukhaliṅgam.

TEMPLES OF SOUTH KOSALA:

The unique historical and cultural position of Kośala during the Post-Gupta period is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the ancient monuments of this region. Like Utkala, Kaliṅga, Magadha, Lāta and other regions in north India, Kośala throughout the ancient period was conceived of, at least among the north-Indian intelligentsia, as a distinct geographical region with its own special boundaries and characteristics. The Gupta and Vākātaka artistic influences emanating from these regions were nonetheless important in forming art tradition in the sixth century. Significantly, however, each of the sixth century works in South Kosala illustrates a distinctive regional reaction to Gupta and Vākātaka modes.

32. The Jagamohana of the Paraśurameśvara is said to have been built later (Debala Mitra, Bhubaneswar, p.24).
TEMPLES OF TĀLĀ:

The earliest and most impressive sixth century works are the Jethani, and Devarāni temples near the village of Tālā, fifteen miles south of Bilaspur in the Bilaspur district of Madhya Pradesh. The Jethani temple is in complete ruins, while the Devarāni Temple is in excellent condition except for its missing superstructure. The Devarāni temple faces east, and the shrine is now dedicated to Saiva worship. The overall length of the temple is 42'3" and the width of the back or west wall is 27'7". The temple is divided into two almost equal rooms (garbhagṛha, antarāla) which measures 12' long and 13'3" wide. The jambs lintel and of the outer vestibule or mandapa bear the rich sculptures.

The ground plan of the Devarāni Temple is unique not only in South Kosala but in India as a whole in the Gupta and Post-Gupta period. It is unique in that the large inner sanctum is preceded by an almost equally large room (antarāla) and a narrow mandapa. This unusual plan need not be perplexing.

33. The first notice of Tala is reported by Beglar, A.S.I, vol.VII, p.168. The term Devarāni and Jethani in Hindi refer respectively to the husband's younger and older brother's wives.

34. Stadtner,D.Martin, From Sirpur to Rajim, California,1976, pp.19ff.

35. ibid.

36. ibid.
when interpreted in the light of the great diversity of
temple ground plans in ancient India. The important temples
of the Gupta period in north India, for example, conform to
no single, dominant pattern. Gupta period shrines at Nachna
Kuthara, Bhumra, Deogarh and Darra are ample proof of this
diversity. During the Post-Gupta period, even individual
sites reveal numerous contemporary temples with different
ground plans. Better known examples would include the early
western Chalukyan site of Aihole and the Pallava capital at
Mamallapuram.

The Devarāṇi temple is the only surviving temple
in early South Kosala constructed largely on stones.
The superstructure was probably made of brick, since a large
amount of broken brick is found surrounding the exterior base
of the temple. During the subsequent Śomavaṃsi period brick
was the principal medium, and it was not until the medieval
Kalachuri temple in South Kosala that stone once again was
commonly adopted.

The jambs of the doorway are divided into four
unequal rectangular sections. At the base are two standing
female figures and their entourages which, although badly
affected, probably represent the river goddesses, Gaṅgā and
Yamunā. The next register of the south jamb is filled with
three small parallel compartments filled with amorous couples
or mithunas, and in the case of the north jamb, with small
ganas. Above this register on both sides are impressive Kirttimukhas which project a full six inches from the surface of the jamb. Above the Kirttimukhas, in the topmost register on the south jamb, is a seated Kubera with attendants, and on the north jamb are Śiva and Pārvati seated in their mountain retreat and surrounded by ganas.

The lintel is divided into two approximately equal sections. In the top is a seated figure of Lakṣmi flanked on both sides by showing elephants and a host of human supplicants bearing gifts. Beneath this is the lowermost section, which contains in the centre a standing four-armed figure representing Kankālamurti, flanked by two standing bhutas. The four arms are fragmentary, but enough remains to indicate that a drum and a staff adorned with bones (Kankāla danda) were in his right hands. While one of his left hands held a batton (yastī or prahāra) to strike the instrument, the other may have been held against his waist. All these attributes are recognised in a number of late north and south Indian texts. Not only is this representation of Kankālamurti one of the rare examples of this deity in north India; it is perhaps the earliest representation of the form in India. The Kankālamurti form of Śiva is one which became common in medieval South India.

Donald Martin Stadtner, An Early Kankālamurti from Kośāla, College of Arts Association Meeting, Chicago, January 1976.
The combination of such rich floral and figural decoration on the doorway makes it appear that the designers intended to leave no spaces blank. Not only is the execution of the work precise, but the choice and interpretations of motifs exhibit innovations and even genius in certain areas. For example, the nearby three-dimensional Kirttimukha of the jambs, with the beautiful incorporation of floral forms, finds no comparison in detail and inventiveness to other Kirttimukhas in north India during a comparable period. No less important is the overall design of the doorway where there seems to be little influence from north Indian temple doorway convention\textsuperscript{38}.

One innovation, for example, is that the figural sculpture has been placed on the inner sides of the jambs and not on the outer sides, as was the dominant mode in north India during the fifth and sixth centuries\textsuperscript{39}. Also unlike many late Gupta north Indian doorways, there is no suggestion of an architectonic relationship between the pilasters of the jambs and any miniature shrine or Chandrasālās on the lintel. Absent also are small indentations at the top of the doorway jambs which create a type of T-shape appearance in many north Indian Gupta doorways. Also eschewed at Tālā is the placement on the jambs of mithuna couples in small rectangular niches.

\textsuperscript{38.} Stadtner, D. Martin, \textit{From Sirpur to Rajim}, California, 1976, p. 22ff.
The exterior of the temple consists of large projecting vertical niches which extend from above the temple base and continue up the roof cornices. The central niche for the north, south and west sides of the temple is crowned by a makaratorana. Immediately to the west of the vestibule in both north and south sides in another niche crowned by a makaratora. The narrow bases and shallow sides of the niches indicate that images were never intended for the exterior. The entire exterior design associates the Devarāṇi Temple squarely with South Indian temple traditions. The earliest southern and Deccan examples to exhibit these characteristics are the Upper Śivālaya Temple at Bādāmi and the Arjuna Ratha Temple at Māmallapuram, both dated to the seventh century. The moulding of the base of the Devarāṇi Temple can be classified also with a typically Drāviḍian base (adhiṣṭhāna) of a type known as pralibandha.

In the light of architectural and iconographic connections the temple has with specially south Indian forms, the appearance of the temple in South Kosala must be understood...

40. The Art of Indian Asia, II, (Bollingen Series : Princeton University Press, 1955, pp. 141-269). At the Śivālaya Temple the exterior of the antarāla is designed with lattic windows and images in the centre. On the exterior of the Arjuna Ratha, large images and mithunas occupy the spaces in between the pilasters.

41. The other major type of South Indian adhiṣṭhāna is known as Pidhabandha and is commonly found on Pallava Temple and Chālukya temples of Aihole.
as an isolated example of Southern influence. Sixth century examples of similar forms probably existed in the south and in the Deccan, but these were constructed of perishable materials and therefore have not survived. Although the exterior of the temple and the iconography point in the direction of South India, the sculptural style conforms to north Indian standards. This paradox can perhaps be explained by hypothesizing the appearance of a group of South Indian Saivas in South Kosala who adopted certain elements to which they were accustomed, but employed local craftsmen who were imbued with north Indian sculptural traditions.

The craftsman's forte at Tālā was the elaboration of minutiae and the ability to reduce the available cutting surface to a point beyond which planes would be impossible to recognize. This quality is illustrated in the precise carving on the bottom side of the lintel where, around the central medallion, is a twisted band consisting of five different types of vegetation and numerous floral petals juxtaposed to indicate endless depth.

42. Stadtner, D. Martin, op. cit., p. 23.
Precise date for the temples at Tālā and the isolated fragments at Malhar, Senakapat and Turturiya are difficult to determine in the absence of inscriptions and strong connections with more securely dated Gupta and Vākātaka monuments. In the light of these obstacles it is perhaps best to look backward from the vantage point of more securely dated Somavāṃsi works in South Kosala itself, such as the Laksmana Temple which dates to cir.595-605 A.D.⁴⁴ Of all the sixth century works, Tālā appears to be the earliest with its general resemblance to late Gupta period sites such as Nachna Kuthara. Since the sixth century works in South Kosala, of which Tālā is the best representative, differ markedly from earliest monuments at Sirpur, it is probable that a considerable period, no less than fifty years, separates the two. The date for Tālā, therefore would be cir.530-550 A.D.⁴⁶

44. Stadtner,D.Martin, op.cit., p.
LAKSMANA TEMPLE AT SIRPUR:

The earliest and the most impressive surviving monuments at Sirpur is the brick Laksmana Temple (fig. 6). From an inscription (originally of the temple) edited by Hiralal and dated by him to the 8th or 9th century A.D., we know that this temple, originally dedicated to Viṣṇu, was constructed by Vāṣaṭa, Queen Mother of Mahāśivāgupta Bālārjuna towards the close of the 7th century A.D. It stands on a high stone platform, approached from the eastern end by a double flight of steps. The temple consisted of a square sanctum with an oblong mandapa in front. The latter is now completely ruined. Apart from the pillars in the mandapa and the doorframe of the sanctum which are in stone, the entire temple is built of brick.

The outer walls of the sanctum are elaborately decorated with Chaitya-arch-motif and vase-shaped mouldings at the base. Of special interest are the three false windows at the back and side walls of the shrine, imitating wood work and enriched with minute details, all in the difficult medium:

47. Laksmana temple was first describe by Beglar and then again commented upon by Cunningham. Actual restoration at Sirpur were not begun until Chhatisgarh became part of the Bombay circle in 1904, and from the beginning, attention was given almost solely to the Laksmana Temple. A list of suggested repairs is contained in the Archaeological Survey of India Progress Report, Western India, 1904 and work was started on 1905.


49. Dikshit,M.G. Temples of Sirpur and Rajim, pp.18ff.

50 ibid.
of brick. The temple had a double cornice decorated with rows of chaitya arches, set against a band of check patterns with alternately hallowed squares; this gives a very pleasing effect of light and shadow. Introduced at the corners are some charming figures of roaring lions and kichakas. The Śikhara consisted of a number of mouldings decorated with the Chaitya-arch-motif interpersed with pillar-like struts in between each arch. A corbelled triangular opening in the front wall of the sanctums, which probably stood above the flat roof of the adjoining mandapa, is an interesting feature. (It is also noticed in the temples of Pujaripali and Kharod.) The roof of the śikhara has fallen but was probably flat and adorned with an āmalaka. The interior of the sanctum is plain and the inside of the śikhara has been bolstered up for chiselling done with remarkable accuracy as to retain the sharpness of outline and then rubbed down to a smooth plane in order to avoid any traces of joints. This appearance therefore is that of a solid mass without the patchy effect characteristic of brickwork.

Offering his views on the brick construction and the architectural features of the temple, Donald Martin Stadtner says -

It can be determined that the Laksmapa Temple, the Anandaprabhā Vihāra, and a mass of remains at the site conform to a fairly consistent style, and that these monuments can be dated roughly to within the first two decades of the seventh century. 51

51. Stadtner, D. Martin, From Sirpur to Rajim, p. 40ff.
But Thomas Donaldson strongly differs in his view regarding the date of the Laksmana temple. He has fixed the period of construction of the temple to 8th century A.D. after an analytical study of the palaeography of the inscriptions found in the temple.

MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS:

RATNAGIRI

The excavation at Ratnagiri on the bank of river Kelua in the district of Cuttack, by the Archaeological Survey of India, exposed the remains of a huge Buddhist establishment in Orissa. From the substantial remains and numerous sculptures it is abundantly clear that Buddhist establishment of Ratnagiri, with its nucleus dating from the fifth century A.D. or even earlier, witnessed a phenomenal growth in religion, art and architecture. The information supplied by the Tibetan work is no doubt scrappy, but it affords a glimpse of Ratnagiri as an important religious and philosophical academy where eager students and scholars used to study under the intellectual stalwarts of Buddhism.

54. Please see chapter VII, Supra, p.
In the work of the Tibetan historian Tārānāth there is a notice of the establishment of Ratnagiri at its early stage. It is stated in the work that towards the end of the life of king Buddhapaksha a vihāra called Ratnagiri was built in the east in the kingdom of Odivisa i.e. Orissa on the crest of a hill situated near the sea and that in this vihāra were kept three sets of Mahayana and Hirayana Sastra, and there were eight great group of dharma and five hundred monks.

From Tārānāth's account it appears that Buddhapaksha, a king of Varanasi, flourished long before the Pāla king Gopāla (cir. 750-70 A.D.) and was even earlier than Harshavardhana (606-46 A.D.). He is stated to have been the causin of Dharmachandra, a ruler in the east. Buddhapaksha, a zealous advocate of Buddhism, was credited with the restoration of the glory and the faith which had eclipsed due to Hunimanta (Huṇaking) who fought with the king Dharmachandra, overwhelmed the kingdom of Magadha and demolished the temple.

55. Chapter XXI of Tārānāth's work, History of Buddhism in India, (Completed in 1608).
56. Mitra Devala, op.cit.
57. Nalinaksha Dutta's Forward to Buddhism in Orissa, (Cuttack, 1958) by N.K.Sahu, p.VII.
After the death of Dharmachandra, Buddhapaksha, in alliance with the kings and feudatory chiefs of the western and central India, killed Hunimanta. Nalinaksha Dutta feels that Buddhapasha was a nick-name of the Gupta king Narasimhagupta Bālāditya (first half of the sixth century A.D.) a name given to him by the Buddhists as a patron of Buddhism and an enemy of the Hūṇas who were anti-Buddhists.\(^59\)

We do not have any other historical records to connect the foundation of the monastic establishment of Ratnagiri with the reign of Narasimhagupta Bālāditya whose dominion included Kaliṅga.\(^60\) The data derived from the excavations, however, coincides with the period of Narasimhagupta Bālāditya.\(^61\) The earliest available Buddhist inscriptions, all of which record the text of the Pratityasamutpāda-sutra,\(^62\) belong palaeographically to the later part of the Gupta period.\(^63\)

The stupa being the principal object of worship in the Buddhist religion in its earlier phase, it was but natural that the site for it was selected at highest eminence

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59. Forward to N.K. Sahu's *Buddhism in Orissa*, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, 1958, p.VII.


61. Mitra Devala, op.cit., p.16.

62. The text inscribed on stone in the both Sanskrit and Prakrit.

63. ibid.
of the hill which would provide the best view of the stupa from kilometres around. The main stupa located on the summit is made of fine brick with lime plaster. The projections are crudely relieved with horizontal mouldings. This structure of the 9th century A.D. was on the ruined plinth of an earlier edifice assignable to the Gupta period containing a slab with the inter inscription - Pratityasamut-pāda-sutra. When the stupa was reconstructed in the second phase, the earlier plan was significantly altered giving a circular shape with the construction of two circular walls at the two different levels. The two walls were built with bricks and brickbats of the earlier structure. The compound of the main stupa was embellished with stupas of varied dimensions. Some of such stupas contain on all four sides the figures of Buddha, Dhyāni Buddha, Tārā-Lokesvara etc.

To the north of the main stupa are seen the two quadrangular monasteries lying adjacent to each other. The large one consists of a stone-paved yard surmounted by the 24 cells, the pillared anti-chambers and an entrance complex. It had an upper storey connected by a stone staircase in the south-western corner. With its architectural grandeur effective composition and splindled array of sculptures and delicate and admirably finished decorative patterns, it impresses us as a great monument.

64. Mitra Devala, op.cit., p.17.
GANIÅPÄLI

Ruins of the Muchalinda Buddha monastery covering an area of about one and half acres of land near the confluence of the river Aṅg and Magan at Ganiāpāli in the Sambalpur District of Orissa have been discovered by the Sambalpur University. The structure of this monastic establishment was made up of burnt bricks.

In the northern area of the monastery at a depth of 2 feet a portion of the floor paved by bricks, was brought to light. Again, at a depth of 3 feet, a massive but truncated wall running east to west was discovered. The breadth of the wall was two feet and ten inches which might be one of the foundation-walls of the monastic establishment. N.K. Sahu states that the extensive floor paved with bricks suggested that there were big halls or dormitories in that area. In the southern side of the chaitya hall at a depth of only one foot, structural walls of the monastery came to light. The main wall of the chaitya hall, which ran from west to east was excavated. This wall consisted of light layers of bricks placed on boulders.

65. The excavations work was under taken by the Post-Graduate Department of History in the month of May-June, 1978, Interim Excavation Report, p.10.
66. ibid, pp.12-14.
Another massive wall apparently onee of the foundation walls, measuring about 2 feet 10 inches in breadth, was discovered in the northern area. This wall ran from north to south and consisted of twelve layers of well-burnt bricks. The binding mortar was strong earth and sandy clay. Small chips of stone were also frequently filled in the walls. Each A number of side walls, measuring about one foot in width, branched out from this huge wall and ran in different directions. These side walls have foundations of stone boulders. In many places these side walls formed small cells measuring about 6' x 8'. These one-beded small cells were probably meant for the Bhikshus (mendicants). The ground floor contained large numbers of such small cells and only traces of four cells could be recovered by the present excavation. The most interesting thing is that such type of cells and chambers are also found at Nalanda and in Dharma Chakra Jina Vihara of Sarnath. A brick-floor, six feet in width, extending from the main walls of the chaitya hall towards the south has also been found.

The heavy foundation walls, so strongly constructed, led N.K. Sahu to believe that the entire structure of the monastery to be a multi-storeyed building.

The excavations reveal that the monastery had structural buildings on northern and southern sides of the main chaitya hall. The northern area showed evidence of same dormitory-like buildings and the southern sector gave clear evidence of the number of chambers clustered together. Whatever evidences are in the 1st phase of the digging suggests that the northern sector had the establishments for teaching at the ground floor and probably the residential accommodations for the learners in the upper floors. 69

The name Muchalinda is known to us through tradition. Scholars 70 believe that the adjacent village of Melchāmundā derives its present name from the word 'Muchalinda'.

The Muchalinda monastery has been assigned to the 5th century A.D. 71 The size of the bricks used in the construction of the monastery varied from 14" x 8" x 2½" to 9" x 8" x 3". The size of these bricks indicate very early construction, before and during the Gupta period 72. The size of the bricks of Kushāna period was 14 to 14½" x 9" to 9½" x 2½" to 3". If we compare the bricks of Gaṇiāpāli with

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70. Charles Fabri, History of the Art of Orissa, p.39.
71. ibid, pp.14-15.
72. Charles Fabri, loc.cit, p.35.
those of the Kushāṇa period, then it seems clear that the Ganiapali early bricks are typically of Kushāṇa size\textsuperscript{73}. Fabri\textsuperscript{74} concluded that this Buddhist establishment had a considerable life, probably extending from the early centuries of this era to about the 5th or 6th century A.D. Buddhist monastery of such gigantic nature is rarely found during the 4th-5th centuries A.D.

Remains of another Buddhist Vihāra, datable to about 4th and 5th centuries of Christian era, have also been discovered at Nāgrāj on the left bank of the river An̄g and situated at a distance of about 18 K.M. from Ganiapali. On a mound, covering about an acre, large sized old bricks, stone mandapa with broken pillars and ruins are found. There are a large number of stone fragments of all sizes and shapes, some of them clearly recognisable as faces, some as seated and standing figures, others as limbs of one-time images. And as the bricks and fragments of bricks spread almost continuously from the Muchalinda shrine to this pile of stone ruins, it is justifiable to say that we have here a very large ancient establishment underground\textsuperscript{75}.

\textsuperscript{73} Charles Fabri, \textit{History of the Art of Orissa}, p.35.
\textsuperscript{74} ibid, p.36.
\textsuperscript{75} Das,H.C. \textit{Cultural Development in Orissa}, pp.152-54.
SCULPTURES:

VISNU IMAGE

During the fifth century A.D. in Kalinga the concept of incarnations of Viṣṇu seems to have gained popularity. Gupta inscriptions and monuments show that the various incarnations of Viṣṇu were worshipped throughout the Gupta empire. Among the incarnations of Viṣṇu, Varāha incarnation was indeed very popular in Kalinga. The Varāha-Narasimha image in the Varāha-Narasimha temple at Simachalam attracts our attention. The temple has been assigned to a later date of thirteenth century A.D. but the image of the presiding deity is much older. The presiding deity is Varāha-Narasimha, a combination of Man-Lion (Nara-simha) and Boar (Barāha). The deity is covered with an unguent of sandal paste, and only on Aksyayatrityā day i.e. the third day of the month of Vaiṣākha, the sandal paste is removed and the real appearance (Nijasya rupa) of the Lord is exposed to the devotee. The image made of stone (fig.7) is about 2½ ft. in height with the crude form of the face of a boar and the tail of a lion on a human torso. With only two hands it stands on a tribhaṅga pose. The limbs are not distinct, the legs have

77. Sundaram, K. Temples of Simachalam, p.94ff.
no feet and the hands are devoid of palms. Even the boar-face and the tail are not distinct. There is no ornamentation and drapery. We think that Prithivimahārāja of Śrīrāmakasyapa gotra who occupied Kaliṅga towards the last part of sixth century A.D. carried this concept of the cult of Varāha as far as Virajā.

In Kaliṅga, Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu, identified with Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa⁷⁹, seems to have been worshipped in all the important religious centres. On the Mahendragiri itself, which is the most important religious centre under the Māṭharas, we notice a beautiful image of Viṣṇu. It is a sthānakamurti with four arms. The halo round the head is plain and kiriti on the head is slightly truncated at the top. In upper right hand, he holds a conch, the lower right hand is free. The upper left hand is broken, while the palm of the lower left hand is placed on the Gada. Ornamentation on the figure is in the nascent form. From these iconographic features this has been suggested that the figure was an artistic creation of the sixth century A.D. when Pravaṅjanavarman was ruling from the Mahanadi to Kṛṣnaveni⁸⁰.

⁷⁹. Parija, H.K. op.cit.
⁸⁰ ibid.
It is interesting to note that there is a beautiful image of Viṣṇu (fig.8) on the bank of Vindusaravara at Bhubaneswar which is a place of Śaivite importance. It is a four-armed standing image. It wears a yajnopabita which stretches from the left shoulder to the right thigh, a plain girdle round the waist, two necklaces, makarakanḍalas, and arm-lets in two arms. The head is decorated with a plain cylindrical liara (kiriṭi) without any mark of Srivatsalāṁchhanā or Kaustabhāmani. The face is serene and reserved. The eyes and lips are closed which indicate meditative pose. The upper left hand is placed on the discus. The upper right hand holds the mace while the lower right hand is let loose without lotus, thereby indicating that palm itself in lotus, 'Pādmapāṇi'. There are no accessories like Āyuḍha-Puruṣa or Śrī or Pusti. There are no attendant jewelled crown, Śrivatsa mark and Kaustubha jewells which are conspicuous by their absence in this image, whereas Brihāḍaṁhitā composed in the sixth century A.D. refers to these distinctive features of Viṣṇu. Hence, it can be said that the image is earlier than the time of Brihāḍaṁhitā.

Ornamentation was in its nascent form in the Gupta period.


82. Parija, H.K. op. cit.
It seems that the icon was produced in the last part of the fifth or early part of the sixth century A.D.\(^{83}\) when Brihadsamhitā had not attended celebrity. The cyclindrical, tiara along with plain halo or śivaschakra round the head indicates features of the Gupta art. We know that the Māṭhara king Pravaṇjanavarman had extended his territory as far as the Mahānadi in the north. As noted, he was a worshipper of Nārāyaṇa, and in all probability, he was initiated to the Pancharātra system. As a mark of his political triumph almost at the north extremity of his empire he seems to have ordered for the establishment of a temple, where the aforesaid Viṣṇu image was possibly installed. The temple seems to have been destroyed, but the image is still intact in a later votive temple on the bank of Vindusarovara at Bhubaneswar.

An inscribed image of Viṣṇu noticed at Burhikhar near Malhar (Bilaspur district of Madhya Pradesh) indicates that the Bhāgavata cult in South Kosala emerged as early as second century B.C.\(^{84}\) It is a sttānaka (standing) image of Viṣṇu which is regarded as one of the earliest iconographic representations of the Lord so far discovered.\(^{84}\)

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83. Parija, H.K. op. cit.
The bust portion of an image of Viṣṇu is preserved in the Khariar Museum. The image is four-handed. The upper right hand holds chakra and the upper left hand holds a Sankha. The image is separately ornamented barring large kundalas on both the ears resting on the shoulders with a kiriti marked by wavy designs. The halo is broken and the figure of a lady, likely a Vidyadhara, is noticed on the top. From the style and treatment the image may be placed in the second-half of the 6th century A.D.

A four-armed image of Viṣṇu is located at Nehna. Ornamentation appears on the tiara of the image which is neither truncated nor conical. In the halo round the head a circular design of three lines can be marked. The deity holds a club and a lotus in the lower and upper right hands respectively. The image is shown weaving a garland, a necklace, and a sacred thread. On the chest is found Kaustubha. Sri and Pusti are depicted standing on both sides. On the basis of the iconographic features its date can be assigned to the Post-Gupta period.

85. J.P. Sahu has ascribed this image a date 650 A.D. Early History and Culture of South Kosala, Thesis submitted to Sambalpur University in 1986, p. 281. A few images and broken parts of the images are discovered from Narasimhanath temple, Paikmal, Mārāguḍā valley in Kalahandi districts of Orissa. An image made of red sand stone was found near the Narasimhanath temple seems to be a Viṣṇu image of an early date. Sri J.P. Sahu has assigned this image to the Post-Gupta period.

A broken hand holding a conch and a lotus pedestal collected from Mārāguḍā valley (now in the Dr.N.K. Sahu Museum, Sambalpur University) are with all probability associated with the Viṣṇu image.
Saivism seems to have replaced Buddhism as a dominant faith in Orissa as a result of its coming into contact with the all-pervasive Gupta culture in the fifth century A.D. The depiction in the Ekāṃbra Purāṇa regarding the conflict between the demons and the gods, in which Śiva on behalf of the Gods defeated the demons, is nothing but an echo of the struggle between the Buddhist and the Śaivites. The huge Śiva linga, now enshrined in the Bhāskaresvara temple at Bhubaneswar seems to be the remnant of an Aśokan pillar destroyed by the Śaivas into a phallic emblem. The lion figure which crowned the pillar was also partly damaged and then buried in the close proximity of the said temple. It bears an inscription in the characters of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. indicating that the conversion of the Aśokan pillar into a Śiva linga took place in that period.

NATARĀJA ŚIVA

The Asanpāṭ Stone inscription in Keonjhar district containing a beautiful image of Naṭarāja (fig.9) is the earliest known epigraphic evidence indicating Śiva worship in this region. The image under which the record is inscribed, depicts Naṭarāja Śiva with eight hands. In his

Panda, L.K. Śaivism in Orissa, p.27ff.
two upper hands he holds a snake and in the two lower arms he plays with a lute. One of his hands exhibits Varadā-mudrā while in the other three, he holds a Triśula, a Dambaru and an Aksha-mālā. It is in naked Urdhva linga form indicating Tāṇḍava dance of Śiva after his consort Sati gave away her life in the sacrificial altar of her father Daksha Prajāpati. Nandi and Bhrukuti, his two attendants are represented on both the sides. It is the earliest Naṭarāja image found in Orissa and speaks of the popularity of Śaivism in this country in fourth century A.D. 89.

ŚIVA IMAGE OF MALHĀR

Among the anthropomorphic representation of Śiva mention may be made of the upper portion of an image of Śiva (fig.10) and the head of portion of one Ardhanārisvāra(fig.11) found in and around Malhār 90. In stylistic consideration, while the image of the Ardhanārisvāra displays crude craftsmanship of the archaic period like rigidity, motionlessness and massiveness, Śiva appears to have got the touch of classical art 91. This image of Śiva with closed eyes

91. ibid.
and flat nose, not so well shaped lips, appears smiling. The Kundalas are massive, necklaces are simple, the waist-band is not prominent and both the hands are broken. The head is filled with a closed cap. The image is carved round, and hence it can be assigned to the 4th century A.D. The Ardhanārīśvara is clearly discernible in the left portion which is marked by plaited hair, ear-ring and raised breasts. However, the face does not display significantly characteristic features of a lady-figure like the eyes and the lips. The nose is high and ill proportioned. Therefore, we may assign this figure to a little earlier time than the Śiva image, to the first part of the fourth century A.D. Besides this image a number of other images belonging to the Śaivite cult are reported to have been found in the complex of Devarāṇī Temple at Tāla.

DURGĀ ICON

The earliest known centre of Śaktism and Śakti worship in its anthropomorphic form in Orissa was Virajā, modern Jajpur in Cuttack district on the bank of river Vaitarani. The first anthropomorphic form of Mother Goddess

93. Please see Chapter VIII, p. of the present work.
in her aspect of Mahiṣāmardini Durgā, under strong Gupta influence, as an icon was enshrined in a temple at Kalasapura located at a distance of about one mile from Jajpur. Only the foundation of the temple can be noticed at present. However, from the ruins of the temple which were scattered at the site, it is well indicated that the shrine was a flat-roofed square temple of the Gupta style. R.P. Chanda who was the first scholar to examine the icon of Mahiṣāmardini Durgā (fig.12) at Jajpur was inclined to assign the image to Pre-Gupta period. In his opinion the two-armed Durgā was the earliest form of goddess conceived by her votaries; and Virajā represents the earliest phase of the cult of the goddess. An interesting icon of Mahiṣāmardini Durgā enshrined in one of the niches of the Śaiva temple of Bhumra which is assigned by art historians to the 5th century A.D. is in many respects similar to the goddess Virajā of Jajpur. But the Mahiṣāmardini Durgā of Bhumra is four-armed while that of Kalasapura is two-armed. As such we are inclined to assign an earlier period of fourth century A.D. to the Durgā of Kalasapura; and the architectural feature of the ruins of the flat-roofed square

95. ibid, p.39.
96. Chandra, R.P. Exploration in Orissa (1930), pp.4-5.
97. ibid.
temple also lend support to our view that the icon belonged to the Gupta period. The icon of Mahiṣāmardini Durgā adorned as Virajā\textsuperscript{100} is a two-armed figure. It is made of black-chlorite stone and it is three feet in height. On examining the icon one finds that the Mahiṣāmardini Durgā is represented in the posture of killing the demon which is in the form of a buffalo. She is in the pose of killing the animal while mounted on her lion. In her right hand she is found holding a spear which pierces the body of the buffalo. In her left hand she pulls the tail of the animal. Her left foot presses the head of the buffalo. The fierce lion, the mount of the goddess, tramples the right leg of the demon. The goddess wears kirita, makuta, necklace, bangles and girdles. On the top of the head there are representations of Ganapati, serpents, yoni, linga and moon. This two-armed Durgā is earlier than that of the Śiva temple of Bhumra\textsuperscript{101}, and that of the Chandragupta cave of Udayagiri\textsuperscript{102}. It may therefore be appropriate to assign the icon to the middle of the fourth century A.D.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{100} It has not been possible to reproduce a photocopy of the icon as it is prohibited by the rules of the temple.
\item \textsuperscript{101} Banarjee, R.D. Age of the Imperial Guptas, Benaras, 1935, pp. 142-45, Pl. 2/4.
\item \textsuperscript{102} Banarjea, J.N. Development of Hindu Iconography (1956), Pl. XLA, No. 4, p. 172.
\end{itemize}
Closely resembling the Durga image of Viraja there is a fine image of two-armed Mahishamardini Durga (fig.13) in black chlorite stone along with the decorated sculptures, kept in the sanctum of the Muktesvara Siva temple within the compound of the Jagannath temple at Jajpur. The association of the sculpture with images indicates that the icon was not intended to be worshipped as the presiding deity. It measures 21" x 14". This type of Mahishamardini Durga is very rare in the Gupta period. In this figure, the goddess is represented in the posture of killing the demon in the form of a pure and simple buffalo. With her left hand she is shown pulling the tail of the demon (buffalo). The right hand of the icon is broken from the elbow. The deity is shown piercing the head of the buffalo with her spear between the two slightly twisted horns. The image of the goddess is ornamented with armlets and necklace, and with a snake, crescent moon and linga with yoni-pitha. On the basis of this iconographic features the icon which is a prototype of the two-armed Durga of the temple of Viraja is to be assigned to the Gupta period.

The cult of Mahishamardini Durga is also popular in another centre of Sakti worship at Kaka tapura in the Puri district of Orissa. In the compound of the temple of Somesvara near Kaka tapura there is another significant icon of the two-armed Mahishamardini Durga. The deity is represented in the

103. Pradhan, B.C. op. cit.
pose of killing the demon with her right foot placed upon the head of the buffalo which lies kneeling on the ground. The divine mother pierces a long spear with right hand into the neck of the animal while she holds tail of the animal in her left hand. In this icon the lion is conspicuous by its absence. The mother goddess wears a sāri and a scarf on her shoulder. She wears Jata Mukta on her head. These iconographic features indicate that the Mahišāmardini Durgā of the Prāchi Valley, like that of the Viraja, belongs to the earliest known epoch of the worship of Śakti in her anthropomorphic form in Orissa.

Another figure of two-armed Durgā is found engraved on a stone plaque now preserved in the Dr. N. K. Sahu Museum, Sambalpur University. The plaque is collected from Prāchi Valley; its length breadth, and width are respectively 13 cm, 8 cm, and 1 cm. The image of the Goddess (fig.14) has been carved in relief in a crude manner, representing her with two arms. In her right hand the Goddess holds a long and blunt spear bodily piercing it into the head of the buffalo demon. The left hand appears to be holding the tail of the buffalo which is in kneeling position with bent fore legs and a raised posterior. Only the right leg of the Goddess is visible; the

105. Pradhan, B.C. op. cit.
left one is hidden by the hind part of the beast. She has worn bangles and a strange headgear which resembles the diadem of a bride. The artist has drawn the image in Alidha pose, with high breasts, thick lips, a blunt and short nose and an oval face. The neck portion has been concealed by a thick necklace. From these artistic and the iconographic considerations the image has been attributed to the Pre-Gupta period 106.

Towards the later part of the age of the Māṭharas it seems that Mahiṣamardini Durgā was worshipped with her four arms 107. During the same period in the Śiva temple of Bhumrā we notice a representation of the four-armed Mahiṣamardini Durgā in one of the niches of the shrine. The temple is usually assigned by archaeologists to the 5th century A.D. In the same century in Orissa the Mother-Goddess was worshipped with her four-arms in the Prāchi valley. In the said period the four-armed Mahiṣamardini Durgā became popular in the Prāchi Valley 109. At Motia located in the Prāchi Valley we notice an impressive image of four-armed Mahiṣamardini (fig.15). In her

107. Prachan, B.C. op. cit.
upper hand she holds Śaṅkha and Chakra while she pierces the trident on the breast of the demon with her lower hand. Images of this variety are also found in the temples of Mādhava at Niali and the western wall of the temple of Charchikā at Banki. An interesting specimen of this variety is found in the compound of Markendesvara temple at Bhubaneswar. Here the demon is therimorphhic in the shape of a buffalo. The deity is four-armed. In one of her hands she lifts the buffalo by its tail and pierces the trident through the demon's body with the other. There is little doubt that this image marks a significant transition of the iconography of Mahiṣāmardini Durgā from the Gupta period to the Post-Gupta period. Except the four-armed representations all the other features of the icon are similar to those of the Mahiṣāmardini Durgā at Virajā.

**Buddha Image**

At Gaṇiāpali (Sambalpur district) two life size images of Buddha are discovered; one, the Muchalinda Buddha (fig.16) and the other, depicting Buddha in the pose of the First sermon at Sārnāth. Both the images are in a very disgraceful state and have been badly mended and smoothened with cement by some local artists. Both the images are now almost beyond recognition.
Buddha in the pose of preaching First Sermon at Sārnāth, made of a chlorite stone, is "Probably the only one so far known in Orissa." He sits in Padmāsana and the two hands rest in the lap. The body, the shoulders and the arms as well as the trunks are nicely proportioned and well-moulded. The oval halo and the moustache sufficiently received the touch of the modern cement applied by the local artisans and hence appear as entirely new and never original and genuine. However, the base with a dharmachakra (wheel of Good Law) flanked on two sides by two deer, symbolizing the Deer Park where Buddha preached His First sermon, appears to be original and genuine.

The Muchalinda Buddha also built of chlorite stone, is considered to be the only one of its kind in the region of Eastern India. Here, Buddha is shown seated on the coils of the benevolent and devoted serpent king Muchalinda who spreads his seven hoods over the head of the Buddha like canopy. The coils, hoods, the Ushnisha (top knot of hair) are very clumsily repaired. However, much of the image has retained its original form. Muchalinda Buddha, in the art of

110. Fabri, History of the Art of Orissa, p.34.
India proper, is very few in number "and the occurrence of one in North-Western Orissa is a matter of wonder.\textsuperscript{112}"

Those two images display classical simplicity, are under no circumstances likely to be later than the fifth century A.D.\textsuperscript{113} A date in the later half of the 4th century A.D. and the first half of the 5th century A.D. is highly reasonable for these images.\textsuperscript{114}

**PAINTING:**

**PAINTING OF SĪTABĪṆJI AND DENGĀPOŚI**

Sitābiṇji and Dengāposi are two adjoining villages situated at a distance of about three miles from Dhenkikot, a road-side village, about 19 miles from Keonjhar. The paintings and other antiquities to be found at these places were first brought to the notice of the outside world by Binayak Mishra and K.C. Panigrahi.\textsuperscript{115}

On their importance they were assigned to the fourth-fifth century A.D.\textsuperscript{116} Subsequently B.C. Chhabra and K.C. Panigrahi visited the site and took photographic records.

\textsuperscript{112} Fabri, op.cit, p.35.
\textsuperscript{113} ibid.
\textsuperscript{114} Panda, S.C. Nāga Cult in Orissa, p.72.
\textsuperscript{115} Modern Review (1938), pp.73-74.
\textsuperscript{116} OHRJ, vol.XIII, No.2, pp.21-25.
of all the available antiquities and the estampages of all the inscriptions. T.N. Ramachandran later on thoroughly dealt with all of them and threw considerable light on their historical importance. The huge boulders are projecting over one another form a sort of rock-shelter known as Rāvaṇachhāyā. The upper boulder which is about 22' above the ground contains on the ceiling of its projected portion the afore-mentioned paintings in buff, white, brown, and yellow colours. They at present occupy an area of 17' x 10' which is the remnant of a bigger painted surface. Rain water and numerous nests had been the cause of their damage and deterioration which were arrested by the recent conservation measures. What remains at present is merely a relic of their original magnificence and presents to us a batch of four foot-men, a horse-man, a royal personage, an attendant on the back of an elephant and a female attendant walking on foot. Mr. Ramchandran has also discerned in the damaged portion the remains of two female figures in very indistinct and damaged conditions, of which one appears to be a Vidyādārī and the other an Apsarakā flying above the horseman. The colours used to have been obtained from ochre, and the paintings are of 'tempera type'.

118. B.B. Lal has put them in 'Tempera' category.
The picture represents a royal procession. The name of the elephant rider has been given as "Mahārāja Sri Disabhaṅja' and therefore it is he who is the king and the main figure of the scene. The name of the horseman also appears to have originally been given but the letters painted below him have faded away, leaving only their faint traces. The figure does not seem to present the real portraits of the persons depicted. The whole scene appears to be idealistic. The presence of Vidyādhāri and Apsarā in the upper part of the scene indicates that the king Disabhaṅja has been conceived as a divine being. He occupies an honoured position in the procession, being preceded by the horseman and footmen and followed by the female attendant. His rank is further indicated by a parasol or a banner held aloft over his head by a male attendant sitting on the same elephant and his power is indicated by the vigorous manner in which he himself drives the elephant with a goad. He wears a turban, an undergarment with a belt and holds in the right hand an ankusa (a goad) and in the left a lily flower. The female figure wears an undergarment, a breast-band, bracelets and a necklace. She holds in the left hand an indistinct object which is probably a box or a basket. The style and some details of the paintings, particularly of the female figure, can be co-related with paintings of Ajantā and Bāgh, executed in the Gupta and Post-Gupta periods. OHRJ, vol.XIII, No.2, pp.21-25.
Although the gold coinage of the Guptas has thrown much light on the economy as well as the currency system, trade and commercial activities of their empire, and influenced to a great extent the coinage of different kingdoms in the subsequent period of Indian history, it appears to have very little impact on the currency system of Orissa during the period of their rule. The imperial Guptas who dominated the political scene of the whole of Northern India from the 4th century to 6th century A.D., contributed a good deal to the development of Orissan culture. But we are disappointed, when we take up the study of their coins discovered so far in this part of the country. Of course, it is a well known fact that hoarding and melting down of coins of gold and other valuable metals from time to time for the purpose of manufacturing ornaments may be the reason for their small finds.

Very few gold coins of the Guptas have so far been discovered in Orissa. A treasure trove of only three coins recovered in 1939 from a village called Bhanupur situated under Kaptipada sub-division in Mayurbhanj district while digging a tank. The village is situated on the bank of

the river Sone, a tributary of Budhabalanga. Local information goes that the coins formed a part of a big hoard of gold coins, but unfortunately they were disbursed by those who found them. Only three could be recovered. All the three coins belong to the well-known Archer type issued by Chandragupta II, the third monarch of the Gupta imperial family. One of those coins is now preserved in the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar and the other two are in the Museum at Baripada.

An archer type gold coin of Viśnugupta, a later member of the Gupta dynasty was discovered in association with the gold coins Prasannamātra of the dynasty of Sarabhapura, at Quila Banki in Cuttack district. In 1950, a gold coin of Kumāragupta I, successor of Chandragupta II was found at Kanja, a village situated under Banpala Police Station of Angul sub-division in the district of Dhenkanal. This is also an archer type coin and now preserved in the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar. In 1977/78, at the time of archaeological excavations at Lalitagiri in Cuttack district an archer type gold coin of Chandragupta II was recovered from a resident of the same village.

124. This coin is now preserved in the State Museum, Bhubaneswar.
Besides the three coins mentioned above, which are known to have been discovered in Orissa, there are two other coins, one belonging to Chandragupta-Kumāradevi type and the other of Samudraguptas lyrist type now preserved in the Museum at Bhubaneswar. But they cannot be definitely said to have been discovered in Orissa as there is no record of their history of discovery in the Museum. As the findspot and history of discovery of the first two coins are not exactly known, it is not safe to attribute them to be of Orissan find 125.

The devices depicted on the archer type coin of Chandragupta II are as usually seem, on the obverse the standing figure of the hind on left, grasping bow in the left hand and the right hand holding an arrow, Garuḍa-standard behind the right arm, the legend Chandra, written vertically below the left and inside the bow-shring marginal legend practically visible around the flan, recording, 'Sri Mahārājādhirāja Sri Chandraguptah'. The reverse has the devices within the dotted boarder, goddess Lakṣmi facing front, seated on lotus, holding noose in the right hand and flowers in the left hand usual Gupta monogram above the right hand, the marginal legend not visible clearly 126.

125. Tripathy, S. op. cit, p.60.
126. ibid.
The coin of Kumāragupta I is also a usual archer type depicting on the obverse, king standing to the left holding bow which is out of the flan, right hand extended with an arrow the Garuḍa standard, vertical legend under the left arms reading "Kumāra". Marginal legend is not clearly visible, of which most of the letters are out of the flan. The reverse has within the dotted boarder the goddess Lakṣmi seated on a lotus, facing front, with noose in the right hand and lotus in the left which is very much blurred. This coin seems to have been prepared out of mould.

The find of few gold coins of the Gupta emperors is not indicative of any political expansion, although sources other than coins have revealed that several small kingdoms donot appear to have used the gold coins of the Guptas for currency purpose.

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