CHAPTER IV
CHAPTER-IV

EROTIC SCULPTURES OF MADAN-KAMDEVA

Erotic or obscene sexual representation, exclusive enough to our religious shrines, is one of the most amazing characteristic feature of Indian plastic tradition.

SECTION 4.1

Erotic Sculpture in Concept:

Generally, the sculptural representation of a couple, sometime in sexual orgy or in acute sexual act (mithuna) and sometime in simple pre coital love making act (maithuna) are known in Indian aesthetics as erotic motif. Assuring a new vista to this term, Devangana Desai, an eminent scholar in this field had propounded a new concept about the demographic pattern of Indian erotic art that over an above men women relationship, the portrayal of individual man and woman in sexual and auto-erotic attitudes and in relationship with animal known as bestiality is also included in the term erotic motif.\(^1\) However in reference to Madan-Kamdeva, the term look to have much more wider prospect where the explanation of the amorous scenes are possible only in collaboration of other subjects like dance & music, sage, warrior, worshippers of linga, women in prasadhana etc. as described in sequences. In other word, all these subject can better be included in the demographic pattern of erotic art as their explanation is possible only in reference to the mithuna & maithuna sculptures and vise-versa.

An upgraded version of an elementary concept of human civilization, the worship of sex, in due course of time emerged as erotic motif and later developed as being an essential *silpa* cannon for any Indian temple scheme. Different ancient treatises like the *Brihatsamhita*, the *Matshya* and the *Agni Purana*, the *Agamasstra* etc. have duly endorsed the existence of these erotic motif to our religious shrines. Thus being supported by our ancient treatises, the best possible application of these erotic imageries, however, be witnessed to the medieval Hindu shrines from all corners of Indian subcontinent. This all round availability along with their incessant occurrences to our medieval shrines have normally assigned them with a pan Indian status.

SECTION : 4.2

Amative Sentiment and Madan-Kamdeva:

Referring to Madan-Kamdeva, a scion of greater Indian aesthetic traditions, it is interesting that the general popularity of this great centre of plastic activities itself be ascribed to an unique religious belief based on the concept of love. Accordingly, it is considered as a sacred place of Lord *Kamdeva*, the god of love and affection of Hindu pantheon, who believe to have regained his lost beauty here at Madan-Kamdeva after a prolong worship of lord *Siva*, along with his wife *Rati*. On the line of this belief even today also, the people of this locality have used to pay their homage to the enshrined couple of the main temple (in stella form of execution) as *Madan* and *Rati*, in a love making posture. In this connection, it is worth to mention that no visitors are ever allowed to peep beyond the red cloth used to cover the part below the
neck portion of the enshrined couple. Inspite of our repeated request as being a research scholar of G.U. and even after getting due permission from the Directorate of Archaeology, Assam, we are also not allowed to go beyond the red cover of the couple. But fortunately, the *pujari*, who has the sole right to change the cloth every year on the eve of traditional celebration of *Kam triodosi tithi* in the month of *Chaita*, informed us that the pair is in a naked position with an exposed genetalia of the male counterpart. If this information is true, we at present, have little option to call the pair other than *Uma-Maheshwar* where *urdha linga* is the specific identity mark for this type of composition. Thus, soil of Madan-Kamdeva has already been fertile with the concept of love and the erotic elaboration simply be regarded as an exaggeration of this concept. Here, the erotic variegation are primarily concentrated to the *narathara* section of the surviving plinth of the main temple. Along with that, some architectural components of this site have also beared erotic scenes. Before analyzing all, there should have a brief discussion about the chronology or the phase wise development of erotic sculpture through the period of Indian history to make the matter more comprehensive in nature.

**SECTION 4.3**

**Erotic Sculpture and its Development Through the Period of Indian History:**

The history of sexual depiction has a remote antiquity of its own. Specially in reference to the concept of fertility and its cultic exposition with phallic or symbolic worship of male-female generative organs i.e. in the form of *linga* and *yoni*, look to be the
earliest representation of sex, if not earlier, but at least to the people of the Neolithic phase of our civilization. Linga Puja and Yoni Puja, at their individual level, are two of the elementary religious perceptions of human culture, traces of which, like in other parts of the world, available in India even to the pre Vedic ages. The worship of human sexual organs often referred in collaboration of a concept of fertility. Thus, the personified embellishment of the concept of fertility as well as sexual depiction, later have assigned itself to the ideal of mother goddess, a source of innumerable fetishistic belief of human civilization from time immemorial. The woman has always been regarded as an ideal representative of magical power primarily because of their specially made physiognomy, regular menstruation, conception and most importantly their power to give birth of child. Thus, equipped with these magical perception, in India, from about Maurya period we come across a full fledged cult of fertility goddess .......at various sites forming a belt from the north-western to the eastern parts of India. Her association with male partner ....... introduced us to the rituals developed around these goddess who seems to be similar to the west Asiatic goddess of fertility. Thus, started its journey, naturally in terracotta medium, the depiction of sexual act often crude in nature might have been used in substitution of actual performance of fertility rituals. Memorising this ritualistic appropriation, hundred of such terracotta plaque have been discovered in different parts of India which essentially caught the nerve of Indian aesthetics and

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5. Ibid.
it seems from the later part of Sunga period, in broader sense, from the post Gupta period, this religious or cultic theme emerged as being an art motif. In this connection it is also interesting to note that the post Maurya art had at its back a large repository of ancient practice which came to be fixed in stone under the patronage of the Buddhist Samgha, the royalty and the nobility and the wealthy and prosperous landed and commercial classes of the time have also tried to show that it represents the continuity......that had been going on for centuries. At the same time it aims at a collective expression of ideas and ideologies and reflects the tastes and the preferences of the common people.

Now coming specifically to the Sunga period, the art of this period is an art of folk inspiration, a documentation of popular life and cult belief. All these on one hand while served as the main ingredients in converting the tradition of sexual depiction of perishable material into an art motif of permanent materials, on the other hand it also provides an opportunity to replete them with a secular sensation or to the 'worldly aspect of sex'.

Thus being emerged out of a rudimentary concept of fertility, the depiction of erotic imageries are Considerably influenced by the socio – cultural milieu of societies. On the line of this suggestion, the subsequent evolution or the growth of Indian erotic sculptures can also be discussed in specified chronological sequences ascribed to the development of Indian society through the period of history. Accordingly, the first phase of this

6. Ibid, p. 16.
8. Ibid.
proportionate development as suggested by D. Desai is from 200 B.C.–300 A.D. In the history, this is a period of immunization when Indian society being introduced with fresh lease of ideas by dint of thriving trade between India and the western world.\textsuperscript{11} It was during this period, India had witnessed the inroads of different alien communities to the Indian mainland like Saka, Kushana, Pratihara etc. whose specific contribution was to bring Central Asia into the orbit of Indian merchant which in turn encourage commerce with China.\textsuperscript{12} At the same time the emergence of the Roman Empire as a paramount power in the western world gave fillip to India’s trade from the first century B.C; for the eastern part of the empire became the chief customer of Indian luxury goods.\textsuperscript{13} Tamralipati in Bengal, Kadura, Ghantasala in Andhra, Kaveripattanam, Tondi etc. are some of the important ports which had brisk commercial relations with the west. There is sufficient evidence to show that sometimes Roman and other foreign traders used to settle down in them to facilitate trade transactions.\textsuperscript{14} Depending on all these derivations it can safely be presumed that by the time of 3\textsuperscript{rd} century A.D. India’s contact to the western world, starting from Indus civilization, look to have attained a more wider dimension and thus have created an atmosphere of exchanging views in a prosperously stable state of condition of the country. The intimate intercourse between India and the Western world naturally affected the culture of both. It is difficult to estimate the scope and nature of their influence upon each other, but some of its aspects can be broadly stated. There is no doubt that Indian art and coinage were profoundly

\textsuperscript{11} Jha, D.N. : Ancient India(1977), 1993, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{12} Thapar, R. : Early India, 2002, p. 245.
\textsuperscript{14} Majumdar & Altekar(ed.) : The Vakataka Gupta Age, 1967, p.358.
affected by that of the west.\textsuperscript{15} The best needed support of this conclusion can be referred to the development of Gandhara school of art. The Gandhara art is a byproduct of \textit{a mixture of styles, one of which was Greeco-Roman style of Alexandria and Indian model nearer home.}\textsuperscript{16} The development of this school is an identical phase of the history of Indian art, primarily because of its cosmopolitan approach with due emphasis on realistic physical entities which was relatively new to Indian plastic concept. Lingering this tradition it can further be said that the Greeco-Roman art in simple was more naturalistic and emotional, showing strong human feeling and violent movement.\textsuperscript{17} The aesthetic appropriation of this long travelled concept of naturalistic or realistic human feelings certainly have enough to provide new exposure to Indian aesthetic principles, which was however, possible only because of changing social atmosphere as well as the taste of Indian society at that time. In this direction it is also interesting to note that \textit{trade and consequent urban development in the early century of the era created leisure and encourage taste for luxury.}\textsuperscript{18} Specially, the leisure furnished an opportunity to the luxuriously motivated urban Indian communities to involved themselves in \textit{various artistic pursuits}.\textsuperscript{19} Under these two effects i.e. the realistic or naturalistic impression imbibed from western ideology and secondly the leisure, love now became an art, \textit{Kamkala}, a secular sensation as being endorsed by \textit{Kamasutra} of \textit{Vastshyana}, a well known treatise on sexology composed if not

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{15} Ibid, p.339.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} Tommy E: \textit{A History of Fine Arts in India and the West}(1982)^2002, p.313.
  \item \textsuperscript{18} Desai, D. : Op-cit, p.27.
  \item \textsuperscript{19} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
earlier "but at least to the middle of the 3rd century A.D. All these have open up a new horizon for any erotical explanation where sensualization and increasing use of secular theme like kissing, embracing and other Pre-coital activities become the dominant characteristic feature. That means, a new found deviation from the primary concept of fertility to the concept of natural human instinct in erotical representation arrived to satisfy the changing social alchemy of Indian society. It is however, interesting to note that the erotical representation of this period was mainly concern to mithuna version whereas the representation of sexual vulgarity or maithuna, the most phenomenal option of Indian erotic art, yet to have its ground. It was during this period sex being discussed or studied as it confirmed to the pages of Kamasutra of Vatshyana in reference to goshti, an usual gathering of nagaraka where sixty four Pancala or Kamakala was the prime subject of their deliberation, but their visual representation still look to be a taboo and for that India has to wait for an another phase of socio-cultural development.

The next phase of this reciprocal development of Indian erotic sculpture, as suggested by Devangana Desai, can roughly be assigned to the period stretching from 500 A.D.- 900 A.D. This was a remarkable phase of the growth of feudal economy when Indians were to deprive of their western contact primarily because of the collapse of the Roman Empire, after the invasion of the Hunas. Apart from that, the overland smuggling of Silk worm from China and their appearance into the Byzantine Empire by the

20. Kamasutra was a product of the middle part of the 3rd Century A.D. Chakladar, H.C. : Social Life in Ancient India, 1929, p.33.
middle of 6th century A.D., along with the expansion of Arabs under the banner of Islam have produced an adverse effect on India's trade with the west. All these as a whole would disturb Indian commercial circuits not only in the arena beyond north western India but in eastern Mediterranean. Though this had little impact on internal economy, but in the long run it caused a severe blow on the existing social structure of the country specially, in terms of the gradual decline of mercantile communities and its related nagaraka values. These in combine, seem to have created a fertile ground for the upcoming feudal aristocrat in Indian society for permanency.

In the long run its results were remarkable in nature. First of all, in the religious affairs, Buddhism has lost its original priority along with the declining status of their happy hunting families of the merchant communities. On the other hand, Brahmanical religion came forward with the increasing support of royalty and feudal chief. At the same time, the diminishing intensity of India's contact with the western world have introduced a check on Indian sentiment and thus leaving no alternatives but to synchronize themselves only to their own idealistic views. The greatest outcome of this effect was the occurrence of the phase of renaissance or a phase of revivalism, renowned to the history of India as Golden age when every manifestation of life reached a peak of excellence. As it has already been stated that despite of the decline of India's trade, internal economy did not suffer a lot, the prosperous

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town dwellers still seem to have spent their life in comfort and ease with their usual practice of pomp and grandeur. Under the changing atmosphere of Indian society, a good part of their spirit is now being naturally converted towards the revival of their Puratanadharma. The writing of Puranas during this time is the best supportive evidence of this conclusion as they are being recognized as an attempt partly to preserve Vedik teaching in the form of legends and myths and partly to present popular exposition of cardinal truth of Sanatana Dharma. That means tendencies towards traditionalism and conservatism became stronger day after day, which in its turn, have prepared the ground for superstitiousness, irrationalism and magic.

All these have led India to another remarkable phase of religious development and that was the growth of Tantrism, genesis of which being referred to the agricultural rituals of primitive people even earlier to Indus civilization. The period of our discussion is known to the history of India as an era of female divinities mostly of non Aryan origin and their assimilation into the Brahmanical pantheon led to the growth of Shakti cult which preached that male could be activated only through union with a female which work as a driving spirit for the development of Tantric sects in early medieval period. The emphasis on female creative energy has always been regarded as a matter of magic, the prime code of Tantrism.

Feudalism in India, during this time was the right soil for the survival of all these development specially the nourishment of Pauranic and Tantric religion at their best. \(^{31}\) Whatever might be the status of Indian social polity, for us it is interesting to note that the feudal atmosphere fostered interest in magic, superstitions and supernatural belief \(^{32}\) and accordingly the belief in magical efficacy of sex also stated to have received wider recognition in Indian soil at least from about 5\(^{th}\) century A.D. \(^{33}\)

Above all, this period is generally known to the history as a phase of brahmanical renaissance when every aspect of Indian Sanskritic culture look to have engaged in an effort of reviving their status and that too, in an exalted mood. \(^{34}\) This renaissance attitude or the concept of revivalism which was active in Indian society during this time, certainly have enough to impressed the idea behind the composition of erotic imagery to our religious shrines. Accordingly, the reassertion of the concept of magic in sex have duly introduced them (erotic imageries) with a sense of auspiciousness as it being exemplified by Devangana Desai. Thus, with the renovating ideals of religious prestige along with surviving secular sensuous spirit of earlier period work together in producing erotic imagery as an essential alankara in the art of all religion.

The essentiality of the erotic imagery as an auspicious symbol to the religious shrines thus have duly been endorsed to the pages of our religious treatises. In this regard the Matshya Purana, the Agni Purana, the Brihat Samhita are some of most important

\(^{32}\) Ibid.
\(^{33}\) Ibid, p.112.
treatise to mention. Among them the *Matshya Purana* in reference to the construction of a Vishnu temple have stated that the *torana* of the same should be decorated with *mithuna* sculpture along with other essential item like *Vidyadhara*, *Gandharva*, lion, tiger etc.\(^{35}\)

Similarly the *Agni Purana* have also beautifully concluded that *the last four Sakha (division of temple) should be decorated with erotic imagery*. \(^{36}\)

The *Brihatsamhita*, a treatise of six century have also referred that the door of any Saiva temple should be *adorned with the figures of birds, trees and pots and with male female figures as well as those of leaves, creepers and other fiend attending on Siva*. \(^{37}\)

After being received with an obligatory status, during this time the depiction of erotic imageries are concern primarily to the *mithuna* version. The *maithuna* of archaic nature though visible in some of the monument *but unlike mithuna it was not yet established in the cannon of temple art*. \(^{38}\)

Thus, started with low profile intensity there is an out burst of profuse and blatant depiction of *maithuna* and orgies in the next phase of the development of erotic sculptures in Indian temple

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35. *Toraṇ ācopariśtan Tu Bidyādharasamanitwam*  
Devadundubhisūzuctaṁ Gandhrabba mithunāwitama  
Patrabattisamopetaṁ Simha Byaghrasamanwitam  
(M.P. p.258/13-14).

*Aḍaḥ Sākhācaturthnse Pratihara’u Nibesayet*  
Mithuna’i Padvarnabhīh Sakhasesaṁ bīhhusayet  
(A.P. 104/130).

Bri Sam 56/15.

art started approximately from about 900 A.D. onward. From many points of view this was an important period in the history of India as it was during this time feudalism got crystallized, at the same time the tendencies towards traditionalism, conservatism became stronger along with development of regional pursuits. Above all, this was the period for the prolific development of Tantric culture which invariably put influence on all existing religious system of Indian society and specially from about eight century A.D., it gradually surfaced throughout the subcontinent.

About the origin of Tantism, there is a general believe that it emerged out of the coalescence between primitive magic and highly evolved spiritual ideas. It incorporated folk and tribal magico-religious belief and rites at an organized level. Some of its rituals has close ties with Tibetan religious expression together with belief in the efficacy of mantra (Prayers and mystical formula), mudra (hand gestures) and mandala (magical diagrams representing the cosmos). It was open to all castes and included women in the rituals, which identified it with non orthodox sentiment.

The basic aim of Tantric sadhana like that of the non Tantric Hindu and Buddhist philosophy is to identify individual soul of the worshipper with imaginary supreme soul and that in simple, is the state of moksa or self realisation. However, to attain the same while the non Tantric philosophy showed their preference to ascetism, the Tantric philosophy stand in favour of a short cut
method with the help of some magical and psychological aids.\textsuperscript{44} Five ma-karas, madya, mamsa, mina, mudra and maithuna are the elementary aids for any Tantric sadhana or rituals to achieve moksa. The first three of the five ma-karas are physically available to the world but the other two can be attained only with yogic practices. Thus, the maithuna one of the most important form of Tantric rituals is supposed to be a sacred act, performed under control condition.\textsuperscript{45} With this background, the frankly depicted sexual items or maithuna scenes to our religious shrines often be referred as Tantric art. But the esoteric nature of Tantric sadhana \textsuperscript{46} has itself created a problem in recognising them as Tantric art. It is well known to all that the true Tantric sadhana are never exposed to general public. Over this confusion, Devangana Desai in her thesis has provided the best available conclusion that the frankly depicted sexual item to our religious shrines is not Tantric art, but art as influenced by Tantrism without being functionally related to Tantric sadhana. In an atmosphere of Tantric dominancy, people’s belief in the coherent magical potency that supposed to have in sexual symbol, in terms of their auspiciousness and luck bringing power, was reinforced. Thus, the tradition of depicting erotic motifs to the walls of Indian temple could have sexual depictions though with some minor variation according to the regional silpa cannon which were getting conventionalized during this period........ genuine Tantriks never like to expose their own esoteric practices but would portray sex in symbolic from or in non Tantric sexual scenes. But the Tanstriks in their descendent phase and the followers of

\textsuperscript{44} Desai, D. : Op-cit, p.114.  
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid, p.117.  
\textsuperscript{46} Chattopadhya, S. : Op-cit, p.10.
the misra school of Pauranic Tantric religion, who were not esoteric, could display Tantric practices including ascetics in sex play. In this connection, she further stated that under the influence of magical belief, certain themes associated with fertility were brought into the depiction of erotic motif. Obscenity is used as a device for stimulating generative power. Obscene themes including orgies and bestiality became widespread from about 900 A.D.

Thus, one of the greatest contribution of Tantrism was that it enhanced the social perssibility of sex or sexual relationship primarily in the name of Tantric sadhana where the sadhaka being permitted to established sexual relationship to all women except his own mother, if not in the other part of India but at least in eastern India.

Apart from that, some of the peculiar Tantric procedure associated with ‘degenerate’ Tantric ideals of later period like Vajikarana (increasing sexual potency), Akarsan specially in terms of attracting women, Vasikarana subdution and above all, use of Rasayana along with mantra, mystical diagram for all the same, have further increased the acceptability of Tantrism to the conservatively minded Indian society. As a whole, it can be said that though esoteric in nature, the Indian society at that time was bit more aware of all those Tantric practices along with some fertility rites closely associated with Trantric procedures and their popular impression look to be sufficient enough to caught the imagination of Indian artist.

48. Ibid.
49. Mātrizoniṇ Parityajya Māithuṇ Sarbbazoniṇu Y.T. 1/6/44.
SECTION 4.4
Erotic Sculpture and Assam:

Sharing these greater Indian socio-cultural supplement with probable addition subtraction here and there, it is interesting to observe that the erotic sculptures available to the religious shrines in Assam, are not so acute and concentric in nature as we observed in Khajoraho, Konark etc places. But, fortunately at Madan-Kamdeva, for the first time, we have found a continuous recess of erotic embellishment of significant varieties which are quite uncommon to any other religious shrines in Assam.

From the time immemorial, Kamrupa (one of the ancient name of Assam along with Pragjyotishpur) is better known to Hindu India as a land of magic and witchcraft with its famous tantric shrines of Kamakhya. For centuries, this tract of land remained primitive and it was known as the strong hold of different Kirata groups. The kiratas are being identified in Periplus of Erythraen Sea as the race of a man who had the flattened nose and are savage in nature. The Kalika Purana also describe them as the yellow skinned men, strong, ferocious and addicted to meat and drink.

This indirectly proved the Mongolian predominancy in Kamrupa. However, it is now confirmed that along with the Mongolian stoke, divergent non Aryan racial elements like Negritos,

52. Schoff W.H.(tr.): The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, 1912, p.47.
Australoid, Alpine etc are also here in Assam to contribute in the ultimate evolution and development of different social group and culture of north eastern India.  

Due to thick forestry and extreme climatic condition, the Aryan migration was sluggish to this region. Thus, the primitiveness or more appropriately the age long tribal character of Assamese society has itself provided the necessary ingredient in emerging out this region as the main centre of Tantric sadhana or a land of astonishing magical practices to attain moksa. In support of this view, it can further be stated that majority number of popular Tantric believes like stambhan (stoppage of action), vasikaran, ushatan (excitation), demon–devil, dakini-yojine, yantra-mantra, alchemy (herbal medicine) even the magical efficacy of maithuna etc are non Aryan at their origin and all of them are later being received by the Varnashrami vedic people with due 'Sanskritic' initiatives in them and ultimately these became the part and partial of Hindu religion at large.  

Whatever might be the fact, the local religion in Kamrupa was the Kirataz. The absence of asceticism celibacy and protected vow, along with fish and flesh eating, use of madya (drink) free association with women and sexual intercourse, are some of the phenomenal characteristic feature of Kirata Dharma.

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58. Yonidosang Pānadosang na ganyate Ibd, 2/9/11.
prevailed in Kamrupa. All these have made it confirmed that Assam (Kamrupa) was a land of 'natural instincts' in which along with others, the infinite varieties of sexual relationship and the sexual freedom have given a wide berth to Vamacara practices.  

Putting a step forward it can further be stated that Kamrupa was the main centre of Tantric Vamacara practices in which five ma-karas are physically or literally applied. The Vamacara sadhana can simply be defined as an actual Tantric practice with due emphasis on physical availability of ma-karas. And that because of its realistic appropriation it might have been more esoteric in nature comparing to Samayacara, the only other Tantric procedure, in broader sense of term where the five ma-karas are used in principle and the purpose is served by simple symbolic substitute of the same.

As mentioned earlier depending on the secret nature of Tantric practices, Devangana Desai refused to recongise the erotic sculpture to the Indian shrines, specially of late 9th century as a Tantric art and instead of that she preferred to call them as an art produced under the influence of Tantric rites. Supporting her observation, here we would simply like to add that Assam is a land of the both form (Vamacara and Samayacara) of Tantric practices and accordingly, the people of this tribal dominated region look to be acquainted more with Tantric ideologies, comparing to the other parts of greater India. At the same time, people of this region are also highly devoted to those performances

60. Shastri, Op-cit, 1990, p.82.
62. Ibid.
as majority of them (Pro Tantric religious rites) often have their identities with the formative part of the mother goddess Kamakhya, i.e. her Yoni and Yoni mandala. During our interacting session with some Purohita of Kamakhya temple, we have an interesting information that even today also some of the secret Tantric performances on the line of an age old tradition are being practice in Kamakhya 'mahapitha', however, these are now all at their lowest possible level. The secretness of all these Tantric rites specially, the maithuna or the part of ritualistic sexual intercourse and the high sense of people's devotion have never stand in support of their exposition, the result was the scantily available erotic scene to the all religious shrines in Assam in general.

In this regard, the condition of feudal lords, (one of the main spirit, that work behind all the erotic embellishment of Indian religious shrine, as stated earlier) was also slightly different here in Assam comparing to other parts of India. Known to have receive its early incentives at the time of Bhutivarman, as it revealed from Nidhanpur Copper plate grant of Kumar Bhaskar Varman, the symptom of feudalism became more acute during the Salastambha period, from when the feudal lords started to have enjoyed more power on land in a proper sense of term; they became the lord of their estates which were given to them in lieu of payment in cash, the same condition prevailed however, in a more vigorous form during the Pala period. Leaving aside these chronological development, feudalism in Assam was mainly concentrated to the migratory Brahmin or to other high caste

64. Nidhanpur C.P. :vv. 34-54.
communities who were the propagator of *Aryadharma* in this tribal dominated region. The people, in broader sense, the north Indian immigrants acted as pioneer in underdeveloped localities, they first brought plough agriculture to replace slash and burn cultivation or food gathering. New crops, knowledge of distant markets, organization of village settlement and trade also came with them. As a result kings or kings to be, invited brahmin, generally from distant Gangatic basin, to settle in unopened, localities. These introductions, namely the plough base agriculture has slowly change the socio-economic structure of early Assam, which indirectly help in evolving out a new class of feudal lords. And that was the chief of the small tribal kingdoms, (of the plain) who after being accustomed with new economic standard of life, virtually found themselves in a transforming status of feudal lords under the suzerain authority of *Kamrupi* kings.

Thus, basically there are two type of feudal lords, the *Brahmin* or north Indian immigrator who had enjoyed the kings favour specially in the name of opening up new settlement with the help of new technique that they bring with them to this distant land and the tribal chiefs, some of whom even enjoyed suzerain status in Kamrupa. The later fact is proved when we have found that first two historically recongised royal dynestics in Kamrupa–Bhauma–Naraka and the *Salastambha* are of tribal or no Aryan origin mainly of Proto Mongoloid (Kirata) and the *mlechha* respectively.

66. Bhagavatātu dharmashya
Nidhanpur C.P., v. 46.
These are actually the well known parts of the whole process of Aryanisation or Sanskritisation, started in Kamrupa, as according to the majority number of scholar not earlier than the 5th century A.D. 69 However, this type of conclusion looks to be more rigid one, specifically when the matter is concern to the question of migration, the most persisting natural phenomenon of human civilization. From the time immemorial people migrates from one region to other, the vigorous intensity of which sometime have caused serious socio-political problem, as perceived now in many parts of the world. The determination of time is the most confusing task often assigned with the question of migration and it is interesting that no satisfactory solution ever be exemplified anywhere in the world on that matter except some hypothetical assumption.

Accordingly, the question regarding the age of Aryan migration to Assam has also equipped with lot more confusion and up til now no amicable solutions is there and the controversy still continued. Without entangling ourselves much into the controversy, we here, simply tied to state that the Aryan migration to Assam must have a remote antiquity, signal of which is available at least from the first century A.D. The reference of Kamrupa and its people in the Periplus of the Erythrean sea, which was known to be composed in the later half of the first century A.D. 70 is the best possible support of this conclusion. Unless and until the land of the Brahmaputra Valley was frequented to the greater Indian immigrants, no attraction certainly be left for the classical writer

69. Ibid, p.201.
70. Ibid, p.205.
to make any reference about Kamrupa. Apart from that the reference of *Lauhitya*\textsuperscript{71} and some of its economic product to the pages of Kautilya’s *Arthasastra* has also proved that by the time of the *Mauryan* Empire, Kamrupa became an important part of greater Indian economic zone. While considering its contemporarily, it should however be remembered that the process of the edition and re-edition of *Arthasastra* was continued up to the 3\textsuperscript{rd}/4\textsuperscript{th} century A.D.

In this regard, it can further be presumed that specially the *Mauryan* religious policy and than the political instability that India had witnessed after the collapse of the same, seem to have expedite the process of the immigration of the Vedic Arayan towards the remotest corner of India. And one such proud recipient of this immigration of Vedic people was the Kamrupa, signal of which thus available if not from earlier but at least from the first century A.D. Survival, was the most perineal question for the newcomer who are small in number and tried to have the same simply by showing respect to the aboriginal or tribal religious culture which are more or less based on some primitive magical items. In doing that they however, have instituted a new fillip to the traditional religious culture of this region certainly by introducing some Sanskritic element in them. The mythological story of Naraka and his role in the evolution of Mother Goddess *Kamakhya* is the best proved example of this process of assimilation where Naraka has played the role of a harbinger of Aryan culture to this land.

\textsuperscript{71} K.A., 2/11
This was the earliest phase of Aryanisation to this land when the feudalism though not have gained its ground but still the on going process has duly increased the adoptability of Vedic culture among the tribal commoners. At the same time, some of the tribal magical elements also seem to have found their incorporation in the Vedic rituals and they all became the essential item of so called Brahmanical rites. For centuries this process of assimilation was continued which on one hand strengthen the dominancy of Brahmanical culture in this tribal dominated land and on the other it also concentrate the Tantric atmosphere of actual practices of the Vamacara procedure.

With all these development, the actual phase of feudalism was however started only after the 5th century A.D. when the influence of Kamrupa over north eastern India, after the fall of the imperial power of the Guptas caused the migration of a large number of brahman to Kamrupa. The Kamrupi kings have provided the best possible support to those migrated Brahman, in other word, the kings adopted a systematic policy (as it revealed to the Nidhanpur Copper Plate inscription) for the settlement of those Brahman in the kingdom by gift of land in the shape of an agrahara to further their religious pursuits.

By the time of 5th century A.D. the socio-religious condition of Kamrupa was also changed with increasing popularity of Brahmanical culture in this region. Already the peoples became aware of these Brahmanical rites and rituals in which the aboriginal

73. Ibid, p.117.
tribal communities have also found their own religious pursuits. Under such circumstances, the people migrated from a caste ridden society certainly have tried to maintained their class distinction. For their survival this time there was no need of any compromise as they now have the support of royal house, the supreme authority of the state and above all throughout the century, they have successfully emerged as an influential group in this land.

To have their class distinction, they preferred to use the same assimilated religious form evolved by their own ancestor long before the centuries. The assimilated religious form more or less Tantric in nature where emphasis being given to the magical as well as the free sexual culture as stated earlier. This time they have tried to maintain the purity of these well emerging Tantric rituals of the process of the assimilation with an esoteric mechanism to keep people apart from understanding the actual problems of their life and helped to Brahman and the feudals in fulfilling their two purposes, sexual appetite and the war.  

In India, the feudal lords and the royal communities have always been recognized as two of the primary spirit for all type of religious construction. These constructions on one hand while served the purpose of their religious pursuits at the same time these are also the matter of their social status or the symbol of their power and wealth. Above all, the temples and their arts have been remembered as the true reflector of the taste and the outlook of these two well responsible communities of acncient Indian society. In other word, it can be said that despite of their

real obligation to the *silpa* cannon, the artist who were employed for all these constructions must have intended to satisfy the mind of their patronizer at their best possible ways.

Accordingly, Kamrupa, a highly pro-active region for actual Tantric practices, the patroniser and even the commoners are well acquainted with the esoteric nature of these religious performances. After the 5th century A.D., the fresh batches of migrated *brahmin*, majority of whom though have enjoyed almost a feudal status, attempted to have the purity i.e. the much talked secrecy of their class distinction. Under such circumstances, the emerging feudal lords of *Brahmin* by-caste along with the *purohita*, the most indispensable part for all type of religious activities in the temple, have never inspired the employed artist to make these secret performances, exposed to the wall and thus to the visitor of the temples. The only other major patronising half for all these construction i.e. the Royal communities were also highly impressed with this perennial concept of 'purity' and accordingly they also emphasized not to carry out these erotic elements to the walls of the temples. At the same time the common peoples are also highly devoted to those Tantric ideals as these are all chiefly engaged around the cult of mother goddess *Kamakhya, Tamreshwari* etc. Thus, in Kamrupa no inspirations are there from any corner of the society for the artist to work along with the erotic scenes which are more or less the brain storm of Tantric *sadhana* to the temple of this region.

Under such circumstances a question naturally arise that if there was no inspiration for the artist from any corner of the society, then why these erotic embellishment, though limited
in number, survived to the temple like Madan-Kamdeva. Regarding this question it can be said that by the time of 9th century A.D the erotic imageries, both *mithuna, maithna*, bestiality along with other sexual representation have emerged as the essential *silpa* cannon for any Indian temple structure. As the scion of the greater Indian architectural tradition, the essentiality of these erotic imageries have certainly been realized for all the temple scheme here in Assam also. But the social obligation primarily the pro-Tantric exposition of erotic sculpture often allowed them to have their slot only to the unimportant corners of the temple as it being exemplified here at Madan-Kamdeva where the erotic imageries are being relegated chiefly to the *narathara* section, an unimportant place of the main temple plinth. Again, because of the small sizes of these erotic imageries, it is also not possible to treat them aesthetically. Thus by providing less important places and accordingly small sizes to the erotic imageries, our age old artist had tried to make an amicable solution of two of their perrineal problem i.e. their real obligation to the *silpa* cannon and simultaneously to satisfy the mind of their patronizer. The success of these two mechanism have duly been realised at Madan-Kamdeva. It is because of their attachment primarily to the less important places of the temple and also because of their small sizes the erotic imageries at Madan-Kamdeva often escape the sight of the general visitor and they still remain unexposed under an exposed state of condition.
SECTION 4.5

Erotic Explanation at Madan-Kamdeva:

The Hindu temple aspires towards the heavens. The upward surge of the building has always to be emphasized. The artist has to take care that no sculptural designs conflicts with the verticality of the temple. The poses and attitude in which the sexual act is represented depend to a certain extent, on the space allotted to erotic motif in the sculptural scheme of the temple ...... The composition space allotted to erotic motif determines, to a certain extend, the poses in which they are represented. On the light of this description of the scholar, here at Madan–Kamdeva, the major erotic representations are supervised only to the narathara section of the main temple plinth which is not more than a feet in height. The same are being survive also to some of the pillar relics and architraves as conserved recently to the site museum. But unfortunately all these erotic illustrations are in a highly eroded state of condition and under such circumstances their aesthetic analysis look to be an impossible task to achieve.

After observing the remaining parts of the main temple plinth and also different temple components for successive time we have found that, a very limited scope in terms of space was offered to the temples at Madan–Kamadev for all types of erotic embellishment.

Despite of this limitation, the erotic imageries at Madan–Kamdeva can virtually be classed in number of categories, specially in consideration of the nature, posses and varieties as a whole. The chief among them are as follows :

76. Ibid, pp. 74-75
A) Mithuna Couples:

Generally the term mithuna is used to indicate the amorous couples at various degree of intimacy, however, without hammering in any act of penetration. In other word, mithuna are the generic couples which intended to convey a sense of masonic symbolism in their exposure. According to the Indian astrology mithuna is the third Rasi. The presiding deity of this Rasi is a pair composed of a male carrying a staff and a female carrying a vina. As we have stated in our earlier section in references to the Agni Purana, the Matshya Purana, the Brihat Samhita, the mithuna or auspicious couples are always considered as the most essential decorative item for any Indian door frame, specially of religious identities. During the Gupta period, the motif has been accepted as a necessary device on the door way of a shrines. But with the passes of time it being emerged as an important architectural motif and inclined to have their place to the different part of the temple irrespective of any sectarian obligation i.e. the mithuna need not be confined to a place next only to the entrance of a shrine. The position of mithuna sculptures here at Madan-Kamdeva is the best prove of this fact where they are being found primarily in different parts of the ruined temples even to the narathara section. However, this observation is based only on the surviving portion of the main

79. Ibid, p.58.
80. A.P. 104/30.
83. Ibid, p. 56.
temple along with ruined components of temples as now conserved to the site museum. Whatever might be the fact mithuna, an obligatory decorative device, had not only the sanction of the sacred text, but had the support of traditional practices of centuries of temple building.

Among the excavated materials there are three types of sculptures which can be designated as the amorous couple or the mithuna sculptures. Among them the most important type is being carved out on architraves, two pieces of which are now conserved to the site museum. (Fig 10.1) In both these cases the couples are seated on lotus pedestal. The high sense of erosions have made it quite difficult to ascertain the exact aesthetic nature of this sculpture but still, it looks like that the women offering something to her counterpart, as if a drink. Another specific characteristic of these couples is that in both these cases the women are seated on the right side of the male counterpart which is quite astonishing to the Indian concept of couples. Simultaneously, these couples are seated in such a way at the first cite any sexual sensation are rarely observed to these compositions. However, offering of a cup of drink, is an optional feature of a mithuna or it can be regarded as an indication of a genuine sexual flavour. Thus, the very concept of these two compositions never look to be an Indian and as a whole, the spirit that work behind these composition certainly be the derivation of Greek or Greco-Roman Bacchanalian groups, or in other word these two composition can better be termed as the couple engaged in a Bacchanalian orgy.

84. Ibid, p.60.
85. Ibid, p.58.
86. Ibid, p.56.
However, by introducing them with lotus pedestal the artist have made an attempt to have an Indian effect to the entire composition. Here, it should be remembered that *Lotus is not just a decorative motifs but an important symbol of Indian art and mythology*. Simultaneously, while expressing the *Yantric* character of lotus, the *Vishnudharmottara Purana* states that *the god which is desired by the mind should be placed on the lotus and then worshipped*. Accordingly, it can be considered that these two couples of the pre-coital stage are of divine couples i.e. the couples of the highest categories of divines, semi-divines or human couple with *ineffable joy*. 

The other two types of *mithuna* sculptures are found to the *narathara* section of the main temple plinth. The extreme erosion have made it now quite difficult to ascertain the exact nature of these two couples. But still, the first couple (fig. 10.2) that we consider for our discussion appeared to be representation of ‘donor’ or *damapati* in royal attair. The representation of donor accompanied with their wives is an important characteristic feature of later Indian temple art. Here, women is represented as inclining the man with her left hand which has duly injected a sexual flavour to this composition. That means, the *danapati* is in closest sense of sit with his wife. Further, if we consider the sequences of presentation (fig.12.5) at the immediate right of the couple there is a scene of dance and music and next to the

immediate, there is a warrior with shield and sword. In combining these scenes it might generally be explained that this is ritualistic scene where danapati or dampati, who is also a warrior has performed any special form of Puja with his wife and where dance and music is also an essential item to observe.

Another same natured mithuan sculpture of the previous one is now available in an extremely eroded state of condition to the narathara section of the main temple plinth (fig.10.3). However, the main differences which this couple exposed to the previous one are as follows first this couple has no royal attire to clad themselves, secondly they are more concentric in nature where both male and female forcefully incline to each other in which the head of the female bent apart while the other portion of her body closely affix to the solid portion of the male counterpart. Consideration the subsequent sequences of the couple no ritualistic flavour is there to observe and thus it look simply to be an intimate merry making representation of a couple

B) Scene Representing the Production of Alchemy:

To the narathara section of the main temple plinth at Madan–Kamdeva, there is an unique sculptural representations which virtually have illustrated an events for the production of Alchemy.

The scene composed of two working women(fig 11.1). Unfortunately erosions have made it now quite difficult to identify the exact object with which the two women engaged in work. But still it looks to be a creeper's stick, with the help of which they look to have grind something (probably a medicinal herb.) Here
one woman seated on a stool as if to maintain the balance of the creeper’s stick to the grinder (probably of an old version of Assamese ural) while the other woman is in standing posture, thus materializing the main process of the grinding.

In consideration of other sided sequences, it appeared to be ideal representation of an age old tradition of the production of alchemy. Before explaining, it is interesting to note that alchemy was an integral part of Tantric cult. Although the origin of alchemy in India may be traced to the date as far back as that of Atharva Veda or even that of Rgveda, practical alchemy reached its acme only during the Tantric period. Alchemy, as is well known, has a two fold objective i) the preparation of an elixir of life and ii) the production of philosophers stone for the transmutation of brase metal into gold.\(^9\) Based on the principal of non duality, all the Tantric school, wheather Hindu or Buddhist, by using the magical efficacy of yoga and rasa (alchemy) have tried to attained an immortalized status for the human being, if not so, simply to enhance the longevity of the life. Vyasa and Vacaspati explain the siddhi by ausadhi (herbal medicine) and refers to the school of yogins who tried to attain perfection with the help of rasayana.\(^9\) In Assam, the use of rasayana i.e. the use of medicinal herb in general, has a significant role to play in the socio-cultural life of the people of this locality. Assam is known to be a land of tantra and mantra and in many such form of tantra and mantra, there are the references of the use of medicinal herb. The Kamaratnatantra, an Assamese translated work is the best prove example of this fact. While dealing primarily with the Tantric shat

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karma viz. shanty, vashikarana, stambhana, vidveshan, uchchatana and marana, this book clearly emphasised on the use of medicinal herbs along with the mantra that to be gathered or uprooted at special seasons and in particular ways while using in prescribed mantra. In this direction it should also be remembered that vjikarana (increasing sexual potency) and vasikarana (subduation) are two of the prime concept to attract the feudal lords as well as the royal communities to any form of Tantric sadhana. It is interesting to note that Kamaratnatantra have beautifully instructed number of herbal methods specially for increasing sexual potency i.e. vajikarana and vasikarana, along with stambhan, uchchatan etc. Similarly, the Yogini Tantra has also made some reference about the popularity of herbal alchemy in Assam. According, the treatise have instructed process of producing different form of elixir or alchol for the Brahmin, Kashatriya and for the Vaishyas. It also describe the process of a famous Tantric work i.e. stmbhan or the stoppage of the action of the enemy with the help of herebally produced product. Such analogous description of the use of different type of sura or alchol for Tantric sathkarma have also been explained in the Yogini Tantra. In this way numerous examples are there in different treatises, among them the Yogini Tantra and the Kamaratnatantra are the most important, which have duly accredits an age old tradition of the popularity of alchemy mainly for any Tantric works in Assam.

95. Y.T., 1/6/34-35.
96. Ibid, 1/4/66.
The explanation of this scene is possible however, only in reference to two nearby sequences. In one such nearby sequence there is an existence of a Guru in a yoga mudra (the erosions however have made it quite difficult to ascertain the exact mudra of this personality, only his sitting posture suggest him to be in yoga mudra). Thus, the popular existence of Guru normally heighten the scope for an incorporation of Trantric concept in consecrating the sequence. To obtain success in any form of Tantric activities there should reverentially be a guidance from a spiritual head for success.\textsuperscript{98} The Yogini Tantra, a pioneer book on Sakta-Tantric form of Sadhana duly highlighted the fact.\textsuperscript{99} Here, in this sequence the Guru or the expert might have uttering mantra and instructing his pupil while they preparing elixir with magical potency.

The matter becomes more clear when we referred to an another nearby sequence where an warrior look to be engaged in an active war with open sword and shield. Thus, the consequent explanation resolve to an interesting conclusion that the women prepared an elixir, under the guidance of an expert, for the warrior to attain success in the war. In support of this view, it should further be mention that India has a great tradition of the use of elixir to increase vigour. Highlighting the fact there is a branch in Ayurveda, known as Rasayana-tantra dedicated to the methods for the preservation and increase of vigour, restoration of youth etc.. Thus, the scene excel nothing in favour of any Tantric activities

\textsuperscript{98} Kamratnatra, 1/8.
\textsuperscript{99} Y.T., 2/6/166-186.
rather it explain a popular tradition of the use of elixir to increase vigour on the eve of a war by the warriors belonging to a specified community. However, that elixir was produced in a ritualistic manner with the utterance of mantra by the Guru.

C) Dance and Music:

Dance and music have an important place in religious orgies. At least from the Patanjali's time music was played in temple. In the medieval period, almost all temples that have sculptural embellishment represent scenes of dance and music. The sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva have also shown the same medieval characteristic when we have founded number of dance and musical representation specially to the narathara section of the main temple plinth. Along with that some independent architrave and pillar relic also have beared the same sculptural representation of dance and music.

One of the most significant point to observe about this dance and musical scenes to the narathara section of the main temple plinth is that as in central India, Rajasthan and Gujrat, here in Madan-Kamdeva also there is a tendency to place these scenes near the couple or to the orgiastic group and if not so, then to placed near the sequences of the sringara scenes or to the scenes of the linga puja. That means the dance and musical scenes to the narathara section have a ritualistic approach in their exposition.

Before explaining the dance and musical compositions there are some interesting points to note that like in other parts

101. Ibid.
of India, music and dance have a long tradition in Assam. Mythology states that king Bhagadatta and his companions while representing Pragjyoṭishpur in the Rajasuya Yajna organized by great Yudhisthira of Mahābhārata, impressed all with their dance and musical excellencies; similarly during the time of the arrival of Hiuen Tsang in Kamrup, King Bhaskarvarman have made an arrangement to have dance and musical performances on every evening in respect of the great traveller.

The devadasi nritya or the dance of the devadasi in the services of the enshrined deity of a temple is the most popular and highly talked ancient form of dance, still survived in some forms or others in many parts of Indian subcontinent. Entangling this institution with the concept of fertility D. Desai states that—devadasi are those women who are being dedicated to the temple in the services of God. In tracing the history of this institution she again said that at least from the 2nd century B.C, the inscriptionsal references are there in central India which further highlighted in Arthasastra, Meghduta along with other ancient books. About the prevalences of devadasi institution in Assam, S Rajguru states that both in the early and medieval period, the customary dance of devadasi at the time of worship in the Siva temples formed a part of the liturgy. The Tezpur grant of Vanamalavarman states that king himself rebuilt the large temple of Hatakeshwar to which he dedicated a

number of prostitutes evidently for the service as *devadasi*. Depending on the instances of *Yogini Tantra*, P.C Choudhury have presumed that the institution of *devadasi* developed in Assam under Tantric influence. He further states that in Assam *devadasis* are known as *nati* and this institution is nothing but a sacred prostitution in some forms or other. However, originally there are sharp distinctions between *devadasis* and *natis*. Accordingly, *devadasis* are solely devoted to the services of the enshrined deity of the temple, religious sacredness was the prime motto of their life; they have no social responsibility except the responsibility to the god, general worshippers paid respect to them. On the other hand *natis* are the self style prostitute, they have no religious responsibility, their music were primarily for the entertainment of *Raja, Maharaja, Amatya, Praja* and all can enjoyed them and their music in return of money. Under such circumstances why and how these two institutions mixed with each other here in Assam is a matter of great controversy which can be solved only with extensive research work. With the passes of time, possibly after 11th century, the very nature of the *devadasi* institution was change when some debased practices seriously hampered their original social status and no difference were left between them and *nati*. Leaving this controversy for future research work, here we primarily concentrate our attention on *devadasi* institution or community in broader

110. Ibid.
112. Ibid, p.47.
sense of term, which can be divided into three categories i) *devadasi* ii) *rajadasi* iii) *alankaradasi*. Among them only the *devadasi* have enjoyed the right to perform dance and music in the *garbhagriha* while the *rajadasi* performed on the occasion of royal religious ceremonies and the *alankaradasi* performed on the occasion of social ceremonies like marriage, birth etc.

Starting with this brief discussion the best surviving dancing scene that we observed to the *narathara* section of the main temple plinth at Madan-Kamdeva is interestingly on the side of the scene of a bestiality in which a donkey like creatures mates with a women of aristocratic look (fig 12.1). On the other side of this scene there is another sequence which is composed of a hero in his full armour state and he placed his right leg on the vaginal province of a lying woman. In the very dancing scene, there are three women, the central one in royal attire is in dancing mood while other two encamping her in simple dresses playing *dhol* and *tal*. Thus, the existence of a scene of bestiality to the nearby sequence of the dancing representation have made it quite difficult to explain. D. Desai by considering some customary bestial tradition in European as well as Mediterranean countries, have tried to recognized them as ritualistic congress which sought to insured woman’s fertility while stimulating union with sacred animal. As according to the line of the D. Desai the dancing scene here, can be explained in the following words that this type of outlandish *vidhis*, specially in search of fertility has been

113. Ibid, p.48
114. Ibid.
observed, either symbolic or actual in a ceremonious way, where
dance and music, possibly of an alankaradasi is an essential item
to performed. The matter will be more interesting when we tried
to link up it with other sided sequence of the same, where a Vira
look to have used force on a woman for any sexual rites when he
placed his right leg on the veginal province of that woman. In other
word, it can be said that a man of an upper class society might
have compelled an woman of lower class by using force to participate
in an outlandish sexual practice for his own interest.

But on the other hand, for us, these three sequences
as a whole, look to be a secular sculptural representation of the
life of the upper class people when we referred to a traditional
belief according to which bestialities are considered to be the
symbol of virilities. Accordingly, in describing the life of those
upper class people the scenes represent the pomp and grandour
of their life with a highper sensitive sexual potency for which they
even deared to use force if situation demands.

Along with that, the longest dancing imitation in terms
of sequence (two) is now survived in a highly eroded state of
condition to the same narathara section and that is on the right
side of the main temple plinth from the entrance (fig.12.2) Both
these sequences are the all women composition of numbering
three, in the first one the central figure, as usual is in dancing
and of the two encamping ladies one plying flute probably Akalam
and other in namaskara mudra as if she showed respect to the
dance performer. A high frequencies dance performance is the

theme of the second sequence of our discussion. The erosion have made it now quite difficult of identity the actual hand gesture of these women or the object in their hands, except the left hand of the central dancing lady which survive probably with a khutital and that she played simultaneously during her act of dance.

In search of an explaining ground, the third continuous sequence of this penal is being composed of two sitting women on stool like object where one helping other in her beautification or srīngara. Similarly, in the last sequence of this penal there is a standing women of divine status as she has adorned with vanamala and a lotus bud with a long stalk in her right hand. The intention behind these representations is now quite difficult to explain, but still it can safely be presumed that these are the scenes representing the life of a special class of professional women who after having necessary preparation, have made their appearances in any special form of dance performance. The chief performer of them is being received with high sense of honour as it represented to the first scene of the penal. The existence of a divine woman, as if she guarded the entire penal, our age old artists probably intended to show the status of these women on the line of a divine circle.

There is another dancing representation (fig. 12.3) which also confirmed the existence of a special class of professional women of higher social status. This confirmation being received here also on the light of the corresponding sequence of the very dancing scene where an woman preparing herself for any special occasion and an another woman standing just behind her as if she showed respect to her in a namaskara mudra. The dancing
scene, as usual is a three women composition where central one is in dancing mood while the others on the two sides accompanied her in performance.

Exposing a new vista to the life to these professional women there is another penal consisting of four sequence to the \textit{narathara} section of the main temple plinth(Fig. 12.4). The peculiarity of this highly eroded penal is that each sequence being represented with single woman. Accordingly, in the first sequence there is a standing woman, the erosion though have made it now quite difficult to ascertain the exact nature of this execution, but repeated observation confirmed it as being a nudity exposing figure, however mild in character. The next three sequences are being composed accordingly, first one woman sitting on tool, holding a lotus bud in her left hand which to symbolise her higher status; an woman is in a high profile dancing mood while in the last sequence there is an woman drummer with \textit{Kada-drum} \textsuperscript{117} beaten at one end while she accompany the dancer.

While trying to explain this dancing scene on the light of the supporting sequences of the penal, it should be remember that nudity or the male female genital organs, known to India as \textit{lingam} and \textit{yoni} \textbf{are worshipped and also considered to be endowed with magical power–both auspicious and defensive.} \textsuperscript{118} From the folkloristic point of view numerous ceremonies in search of fertility or fertility related work have been observed almost in every parts of the world where emphasis being given to the male female genital

\textsuperscript{118.} Desai, D.: Op-cit, pp.93-94.
organs. One of the most common occasion where the women performed the nudity exposing rites is the rain making ceremonies, even today also in many parts of India, women performed this rites.\textsuperscript{120} D. Desai when coding from a story of \textit{Kathasaritsagar} of 10\textsuperscript{th} century A.D., referred to an esoteric ceremony in which a queen performed these rites while standing naked in a \textit{mandala}.\textsuperscript{121}

Thus, these special class of women who has a high standard of life and received with almost of a divine status in the society (as discussed earlier), by dint of their auspicious appearances, might have made their participation in some of the esoteric practices which are more or less Tantric in nature. And one such practice is the nudity exposing rites, though the purpose behind this observation is now quite difficult to ascertain.

Another Panoramic dance representation survived to a penal consisting of three sequences of totally different subjects from each other (fig.12.5). Among the three sequences of the penal the very scene of our concern is available in between the representation of a \textit{mithuna} couple and a scene of a war where an warrior being represented in an active stage of war with open sword and shield in his hand. Interestingly in another sequence, perpendicularly affix to the immediate right of the warrior, there is another scene of a war where probably, the same warrior being represented as subduing or defeating a person of his enemy class. Thus the \textit{danapati} or \textit{dampati}, certainly from royal or feudal

\textsuperscript{119} Sarma, N.C. : \textit{Asamiya Loka Samskritir Abhas}(1989),2005,p.216
\textsuperscript{120} Crooke, W. : \textit{The Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India}, Vol.I, 1978, p.70
\textsuperscript{121} Desai, D. : Op-cit, 1985, p.93
enclave seem to have performed any special form of puja of hedonistic nature in search of a victory in a forthcoming battle where dance of this auspicious lady is an essential item to perform. Numerous reference about the pre or post battle ritualistic observation with dance and music are there to the pages of our literary sources, and one such beautiful description being found in Darang Rajbonsaboli, however, of much later age, where lord Mahadeva asked Koch king Naranarayan to perform his Puja with dance and music so to confirmed his victory against the Ahom.  

Along with that some solo musical representations are also found to the narathara section of the main temple plinth. These type of representations are available mainly in the context of linga Puja(fig. 12.6). In one such scene, an woman musician being represented with a string instrument while the other on her side simply listening her. In two other corresponding sequence of the same penal, First, there is a scene of linga puja where an woman offering Puja to a linga with a Padma and in the next sequence there are three women in a procession, carrying the weight of a bell, and simultaneously plying a Pepa (organ). Leader of this procession with her raised hand directing the procession or the musical nodes. Connecting these representations with the description of Linga Purana, it is interesting to find that these are the scenes figuring the ceremonious observation that should have taken place on the occasion of the installation of linga.

123. L.P., 2/47
D) Guru /Ascetics:

To the narathara penal there is another sequence which being composed of an ascetic/guru in an initiating mood, as if he initiated or conducting his usual siksadana secession by muttering mantra in a special gesture (fig. 13.1). The solitary figure of the meditating guru, here in this sequence, has procured an woman as his associate, however the erosion have made it now quite difficult to ascertain her working involvement in this very scene.

Regarding the presence of an ascetics in an architectural penal it should be remembered that in contrast to the paucity of inscriptive evidence crediting king with the construction of specific temples, new motifs are introduced in the iconographic programme in the mid 10th century, possibly influence by the emerging popularity of the Kaulacaras, which testify to the increased importance of the guru and the patron in the changing socio-religious concept of the temple complex. The Kaulacare, while stressing on muttering of mantra and the instruction of guru i.e. by emphasizing on a cult of individuals they simply opens the door to the depiction of royal figures in the iconographic programme and eventual secularization of the temple complex. For the Kaulacaras Guru is the father, guru is the mother, guru is god Mahesvara himself, even when god Siva is wroth,, the guru is the savior, but when the Guru himself is angered, there is none to save. Depending on a verse as quoted by Jayadratha (12th century), in his commentary on Tantraloka of Abhinavagupta, D. Desai intended to state that kaula Tantra was originating in Kamrupa. The pages

125. Ibid.
of our own Yogini Tantra have also reflected the popularity of Kaula Tantra in Assam where a complete chapter being dedicated in respect of guru and his role in the life of man.

Thus, to explain the very scene of our discussion when we referred to its nearby sequences, on one side first there is an woman who look to be hammered on something (due to erosion, it is now quite difficult to identify the exact object on which she hammered), there is another highly eroded scene of copulation almost of Yab–Yum type. On the other side of the sequence of guru, there is a penal, joined perpendicularly, by placing an woman at the cornise. The penal composed of are two highly eroded sequences, probably of divine personals of pot bellied identities. Exposed genitalia along with weighty testicles are two of the important features of these divine personals to look.

In its present eroded state of condition, it is now difficult not only to confirm the exact identities of these two short statured corpulent bodies but also to ascertain the working activities of other corresponding sequences. Under such circumstances, no concrete, explanation or the reason behind the existence of guru to this architrave is possible except the scene of Yab–Yum. Yab–Yum is an unique erotic representation, primarily concern to Tantric Buddhism.\textsuperscript{128} where a couple sits in close frontal embrace. This coitus posture being specifically prescribed for delayed ejaculation or it is a pose served as coitus reservatus.\textsuperscript{129} In Buddhist Tantrism and in some school of Hindu Tantrism (Nath and Sahajiya scct.), the semen called bodhichitta or bija is not to be cast. The fall of semen considered as

\begin{itemize}
\item 128. Ibid, p.44
\item 129. Ibid, p.77
\end{itemize}
a great sin. The Semen must not be emitted otherwise Yogins falls under the law of time and death. So to check the flow of semen, the sadhaka normally preferred to practice hatha yogic technique.

The Yab Yum type as shown to the narathara section at Madan-Kamadeva though not be designated as a complete sexo–yogic or hatha yogic posture, but still the in composed complexities as it exposed to the visitors have inspired us to recon it as being an alternate method symbolizing coitus reservatus, designed specifically for any Tantric sadhana.

Again, in attempting to resolve the problem of the identities of two pot bellied sculptures on the other side of our concern sequence of guru, the point that came to our mind is that these two idols have showed close physical resemblance with some important gods both for the Hindu and Buddhist, namely Ganesh, Kubera and Jambhala. Interestingly these gods are always stands in corporation of the concept of prosperity. Further, the question regarding their exposed genetalia it should be remembered that the genital organs have always been considered with a defensive identity. In this direction it is also interesting to note that the aim and objects of the tantrics were either to obtain emancipation or the countless Siddhis or perfection, mostly for prosperity and happiness in the present life. Thus, by applying the theory of permutation and combination, the matter can safely be sum up in the following words that though not the exact identities, these two looked to be the divine scions of popular worship, taken place in search of.

130. Ibid, p.114
protecting prosperity. Secondly guru, a technical expert of Tantric sadhana here being represented as an official in charge of instructing, initiating or concluding any Tantric sikshadana session for prosperity and happiness in which maithuna is to be the ultimate rite to perform.

E) Vayantarata & Homosexuality:

The representation of secular sex or the sex in harem is one of an important feature of the erotic sculpture, available at Madan-Kamdeva. Depicting two of the most familiar sexual motif of Indian erotic art, Vayantarata, and homosexuality, two consecutive sequences are there on the right side of the main temple plint which can better be described as the best surviving representations of secular sex at Madan-Kamdeva. Referring to the sequence of Vayantarata (fig.14.1) i) there is a couple in which an woman being mate by the male from the rear, ii) a male attendant, stand in front of the mating couple and helped the woman to bend forward and to accept penetration from the rear in ease iii) another woman sit behind the couple with a such an expression that she tried to reject her sight as far as possible from all sexual activities occurs in the scene. In the second sequence there are three women, two of them being depicted here as engaged in homosexual activities, other woman while sitting on a stool, here also, tried to repudiate herself completely from the activities of the women by turning her head completely towards her back.

While to explaining the sequence of Vayantarata, a general suggestion made by Desai over the question of the presence of male attendant in an erotic group have raised a new speculation
about the secular identity of the sequence. According to Bana's descriptions in Harshacarita, no male attendants are allowed to the Indian *harem* excepts the dwarfs, their presence (male attendant) may be regarded as an indication of ritualistic sex.\(^{133}\)

Thus, in case of our concern sequence, repeated observations, specially on the professional get up, have made it confirmed that the person attending the couple is no other than a dwarf. This normally inspired us to designate it as being a representation of sex, if not of the royal harem but at least of an aristocratic life circle. Availing further confirmation to this conclusion, there is another sequence, just immediate to the sequences of *Vayantarata* where a male and a female stands face to face and hold their hands to each other as if they are in a deal for any sexual act.

Similarly to explain the next scene, we have to remember the summarizing conclusion put forwarded by historian D. Pattanaik about homosexuality that in the Hindu literature the concept of homosexuality though not be recognized or approved as a part of the mainstream, but its existence was acknowledge.\(^{134}\)

*In the Mahabharata, it is stated that sometimes two women together unite in the sex act, one of them holds artificial male organ. Kamasutra too refers to artificial organs. There is mention of the use of a phallus shaped plant by women.*\(^{135}\) Different treatises like *Manu Samhita*\(^{136}\) *Narada Smriti*,\(^{137}\) *Yjnavalka Smriti*\(^{138}\) defined homosexuality as an

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134. Wikipedia : http:/pattanaik d.erotic art @ 2005.
136. M.S. VIII/369 to 70.
137. N.S. XV/76.
unnatural sexual behaviour of the human being and condemned it as punishable. In this connection, the *Kamasutra* of Vatsyana have made an interesting description of both masculine and feminine type of homosexuality. Referring about the feminine type of homosexuals, it has informed us that a special class of woman was there to the Indian society, known as *Svairini (Suvarnanbha)* who normally gave preferences in making relation only with her own kind and they refused to accept any restriction on their sexual liberty.\(^{139}\)

Thus these two sequences ie the sequence of *Vayantarata* and homosexuality, can safely be considered as the true representations of a high profile amorous sentiment of our ancestral society. In support of this conclusion we can put forwarded a general explanation that our age old sculptors have always tried to maintain a close circuit relation with their wealthy patronisers. This tendency provide an indirect opportuni t to get themselves informed about the sexual life of the *harem* as well as to realise the sexual fantasy which are highly proactive to the leisure loving mind of the upper class people of the society, as we have stated earlier. Thus, primarily to appease the sexual fantasy of their patroniser, the sculptors, adorned with the spirit of their well acquainted knowledge's about the sexual activities in the *harem*, inclined to depict these type of secular sex on the outer surfaces of the walls of our religious shrines, the best providing ground where only the sculptors have the scope to expose the senses of their aesthetic excellency.

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F) Purusayita:

Again, referring to a less common posture of sexual union—Purusayita or Viparitarata, another representation is there to the sequence of the narathara section (fig. 14.2). In the Purusayita form of union the woman plays the role of a man. Thus, in the said sequence, a man of an aristocratic attire is lying upward just above the ground, keeping his head raised with the support of his hand, as if he observed the swinging movement in penetration initiated by the woman, who sits on his waist portion and balancing her movement by clinging her hands straight around the body of man. An attendant, which confirmed the secular status of the sequence, stands just behind the mating couple with a downward stroke of her head as if she tried to restrict her sight from the sexual activity of the couple. In this regard it is interesting to note that in selecting the sexual posture, the poets are specially fond of depicting the Purusayita, while the sculptors are more inclined to show the male partner in the active role in their depiction of the sleeping coital scenes. On the line of this description, here the sequence of Purusayita at Madan Kamdeva can also be considered as the representation of sex in the harem with a poetical concept to work in its composition.

G) Oral Genital Congress:

Oral genital congress, is an another mode of erotic expression as observed again to the narathara section of the main temple plinth. In the Indian context, there are references of three varieties of oral congress namely i) fellatio, where the woman

perform the acts ii) Cunnilingus, where the man perform the act
iii) Kakila, where both man woman mutually perform the acts. Among these varieties, at Madan-Kamdeva two eroded sequences are there which have represented only the subject fellatio(fig. 14.3) and kakila (fig.14.4). Starting with fellatio, here in the sequence a man stands in a half inclining posture by taking the support of the wall at his back and thus to handle his generative organ appropriately to the mouth of a sitting woman. The woman also have tried to adjust herself to the activity by clinging her hand around the legs of the male. Thus, a due concept of force look to have impressed the sculptor while composing the sequence.

Unfortunately, the single sequence representing the posture kakila is now almost in a ruinous state of condition. The most exciting point to observe about this scene is that though, representing the posture of kakila here two women are shown to be engaged mutual performance of oral genital congress. This identification is possible only on behalf of the surviving sign of the hair knot as affix to the back side of the head of the women. That means this is a scene of homosexuality. Again the posture though have suggested an all women kakila but it is interesting that mouth are not appropriately placed near to the genital organs.

In explaining these sequence it is interesting to note that oral sex or the sex act in broader sense of term in ayoni i.e. other than the female organ is always regarded by our ancient treatises like Arthasastra Yajnaavalka smriti Narada Smrti

141. Ibid, p.75.
143. Y.S., 11/289.
etc. a socially punishable offence. Vatshyana was quite aware of the disapproval of oral sex by our law makers, that's why he is quite reserve in his remarks on oral congress. According to him, oral sex is normally performed by the both kinds of eunuch i.e. eunuch who disguised as male and female respectively. Apart from that this Auparishataka type of sex being practiced by unchaste, wanton women, female attendants and serving maids i.e. those who are not married to any body but who live by shampooing. Depending on the concept of Rajapana as described in Kaula-Chudamani, D. Desai have tried to recognized oral sex as depicted to the walls of the temple as being the Tantric sexual practise.

However, the oral sex as depicted to the panels at Madan-Kamdeva are never look to be the representations referring to any Tantric sexual practice. This is because while referring to fellatio, it is interesting that the very sequence here being placed in between the scenes representing purusayita on one side and on the other an erasing sequence of sexual union of two couples. That means, no such representations are there in and around the sequence of fellation, depending on which it can be considered as Tantric sexual practice. In other word, we can referred it as being a normal sexual fore play often adjusted to the sexual carnival of the aristocrat in which they refused restrict themselves within the stipulated format of the moral code of conduct concerning to their sexual behaviour.

The sequence of all women kakila is the most confusing representation of oral sex here at Madan-Kamdeva specially in

144. N.S. XV/76.
146. Ibid.
identifying it as being a sequence of homosexuality. In that case, the surviving sign of the chignon and the non-availabilities of male anywhere around this sequence inspired us to call it as being a homosexual representation. In this regard it should also be remembered that oral sex always be a phenomenal characteristic feature for any homosexual relationship. Accordingly, these two sequences as a whole are the attempted descriptions of the sportive life of the upper class people as in the first sequence, the sculptors look to have made an attempt to depict the extensive variation that the aristocrats have always preferred specially in selecting their sexual partners with whom they even practice condemnable sexual act. Thus, in reference to their leisure ridden fantasy, the sequence representing homosexual kakila, can also be regarded as an attempted depiction of the life of a special class of woman belonging to the higher strata of the society who to pacify their sexual urge, even deared to opt homosexual activities. In support of this view, we can referred to the 9th chapter of Kamasutra where Vatshyana has clearly stated that holy writ do not affect those who resort oral sex to the courtesans, he further informed us that some women of the harem at their amorous state of condition do the acts of the mouth on the yonis of one another. For Vatshyayana these are the things connected with the concept of the love play.

H) Self Fellation: 

Representing an interesting theme of Indian erotic art—self fellation or auto eroticism, a beautiful sculpture is there to the site museum at Madan-Kamdeva (fig.15.1). As discovered from

among the excavated ruins, the head and the portion below the thigh range of the sculpture in round has already been eliminated and it now survived only with the middle parts of its body. The remaining parts of the sculpture have clearly shown that a man involved in auto erotic act where he with his left hand holds his genital organ while in his other hand he is carrying a ball as if in the fond memory of squeezing woman's breast.

In explaining this unique sculpture, we should have to keep in mind that the semen (viryan), hair, nails are some of the essential offering for any Tantric sadhana aiming at worldly happiness. However, in case of this sculpture the situation looks to be completely different as no religious theme can sufficiently be assigned to this unique representation and thus for us it is nothing but a finest example of the innovative mind of our age old sculptors. In support of this presumption, it should further be stated that all the sculpture that we have found at Madan-Kamdeva are more or less relief in nature and their overall executions are primarily to affix them to the walls of different temples at Madan-Kamdeva. But, regarding the execution of this sculpture, no such supportive flat back side is there to observe which inspired us to call it as being an independent product of an unknown sculptor who tried with his innovative skill at the time of his leisure. Built with the concept of an elongated torso with fleshy abdomen the sculpture looks to be a product of common people's fantasy as no sign of royalty is there to the body of the sculpture. But still, the sculpture being executed so delicately that in the first sight it often appears to be a modern abstract artifact.

Another popular motif of erotic art as we have found at Madan-Kamdeva is the exhibitionism i.e. the blatant exposition of male/female genital organs. Exemplified this concept, the best surviving sculpture here to the site museum is of a seated man of pot bellied nature to an architrave (fig. 16.1). The head of the image is now totally damage and the remaining part have shown that the man is in an acrobatic pose where the main torso being placed in between the two legs, as if he sit on his buttocks; at the same time, the two hands of the image are being planted on the ground, simply to keep his balance. His erect lingam as well as his testicle are blatantly exposed to the visitor emphasizing an apotropaic concept to work behind the execution of the sculpture. Simultaneously, as being a part of a pillar this sculpture must have serve the purpose of bhararaksaka.

The dwarf Yaksas or the Ganas(fig.16.2) are the another important representation that have been found at Madan-Kamdeva to include in this category. Here, the Ganas are being primarily represented as atlantes or weight carrier (bhararaksaka). It is interesting to note that normally Yaksa and Gana have different iconographical representation, but when they are being used as an atlantics in any Indian architecture they appears to be iconographically interchangeable in their sculptural imitation.149 Ganas are found as being sited in kukutasana with upraised hands, the palms of the same adhering to the horizontal above. These are the off sized figure in toto as their head and

stomach portion are disproportionately large and archaic in nature comparing to their hands and legs. Normally the atlantid Gana to the Indian architecture equipped with an apotropaic concept with their exposed lingam. But, in case of the Ganas at Madan-Kamdeva, the erosion have made it now quite difficult to identify the sign of the erect lingam and thus to confirm its apotropaic concept.

Similarly with exposed genital organ another highly eroded nude female figure is there to an architrave to the site museum at Madan-Kamdeva (fig.16.3). This figure, shown to be seated on a peculiar type of bowel with uttanapada posture and thus she has denuded her yoni to the visitor. Unfortunately, in its present state of condition, the erosions have distorted not only the beauty of this sculpture but at the same time it has also made it now quite difficult to ascertain the exact identity of the sculpture.

Apart from that, some highly eroded sculptural representations also survived to the narathara section which can safely be included in this category of exhibitionism. Thus, attracting our attention the first sculpture of our consideration is of a female figure stand with her out stressed legs and accordingly intended to exposed her yoni pradesha more accurately to the visitor with the help of her hands(fig.16.4). Similarly there are some other female figures who stand straight and keeping their hands apart around the middle part of their body in such a way that they intended to expose their physique to the visitor(fig.16.5). However the amount of exposition of these representations are not so acute enough, comparing to the other sculptures of this category at Madan-Kamdeva.

150. Thomas & Danaldson, Op-cit, 1158.
Now in explaining this matter of exhibitionism it is interesting to remember that Yoni is a surrogate of energy or power and it being always regarded as a life giving force. Similarly, the erect lingam generally refers to apotropaic power rather than sexual excitement. In other word displaying of sexual organ is... to be an act of defiance to turn aside evils in magico-religious beliefs and practices. Thus, yoni and lingam have an auspicious and defensive character and accordingly both of them endowed with magical power. This perception, however of male exhibitionism have became popular to Indian architecture, in the form of Yaksas/Ganas, after 10th Century A.D. and from that time onward only, they are frequented to the tala bandhana beneath the raha nich or at the top of stambha designs to support symbolically the baranda moulding of a temple.

Thus, the first two representation i.e. the headless male sited in acrobatic posture with erect lingam and the Ganas, certainly have beared an apotropaic concept with them to expose. But at the same time their limited availability to the trances at Modan-Kamdeva, have issued for us a renewed scope to think about their chronological sequences and accordingly we can sum up only with a generalized view that the apotrophic concept and its sculptural execution have not received their popularity with the sculptors at Madan-Kamdeva and in that sense these can be regarded as the product of a transitional period when this

151. Ibid, p.1156.
152. Ibid.
154. Ibid, p.94.
architectural principle seem to have gained its ground to the soil of this great centre of plastic activities.

On the other hand, the next representation i.e. the deity with uttanapada posture looked to be an attempt to depict popular Tantric from of rite, yonibhisekha. This is a Tantric rite in which a yoni being prepared in a ritualistic mode of consecration.\[156\] In a normal yonibhisekha representation, a second person is always there as in charge of preparing yoni for a ritualistic consecration of sex. However, in case of this representation here at Madan-Kamdeva, no such person is there and instead of that two snake like twizer with their open mouth look to have survived on the two side of the yoni as if they are preparing yoni of the deity for any rituals. Again after repeated observation it appeared that the deity sits on a Siva linga. Thus, the deity whose yoni being placed in contact of a Siva linga look to have offered her stimuli to the same only after the appropriate performance of yonibhisekha rite with the help of some twizer like objects of the linga. The offering of female stimuli to the god is a common phenomenon for any Tantric from of rites. The sophisticated version of this Tantric tradition survived even today also, when water or milk as the substitute of female secretion being offered to the god through the cup of argha which are in the shape of yoni.\[157\] The Worshipper also remain thankful to the god after accepting this water or milk as Padjal through the delicate triangle of the argha, an artificial representation of the sexual triangle of the woman folk. However, the popular tradition referring to the drinking of Padajala, in

\[156\] Ibid, p.1189.
search of the blessings of the god certainly have its connection with the Tantric concept of *Rajapana*. On the line of this discussion we can consider our concern sculptural representation as being the raw version of the offering of female stimuli to the *Siva linga*. Thus, it is the only erotic presentation available at Madan-Kamdeva whose presence being coup up with a Tantric from of worship.

Other types of presentation of this category as available to the *narathara* section look to have no ritualistic exposure in their stand. As described earlier there are two type of representation and in the first of its kind, an woman intentionally expose her *yoni pradesh* (fig. 16.4) which can be considered as a defensive attitude, so to protect the constructing arena of the temple from the evil eyes or from any evil designs. The genital organs, as stated earlier, have an inbuilt defence mechanism and their instant considered as an act insult, which sufficiently decompose the enemy at their first sight. Even today also the symbolic expression of male female genital organs with the help of different hand gestures have popularly used in resisting his or her opponent. Another important point to observe about this representation is that it being affix to the cornice of the main temple plinth and accordingly stand in a delink state of condition with the other descriptions as available to the *narathara* section of the main temple plinth. Depending on that discussion it can safely presumed that this is certainly be a totem used to the temple plinth as a means of popular defance.

In representing the glamorous expression of physical beauty, the other female figures of this category, to the *narathara* section as describe earlier, might have referred to the existence of
a special class of woman whose survival being primarily based on their exposition of physical beauty as well as their proficiency in sixty four *kalas*(fig. 16.5).

**J) Copulating Animal:**

One of the most interesting erotic representation to the *narathara* sequences at Madan-Kamdeva is a copulating animal(fig 9.4). The sequence has showed a pig like creature mate with another from the rear while to its left hand side there are two person, one of them is in an active posture with raised *khadga* in such a way that he went to sacrifice the other person in front of a pot bellied *Ganesh* like deity. To make the matter more understandable we have tried here to have a co-joined explanation of the same, specially in references to the other sided sequence of the same. Thus, starting with a couple of an aristocratic attitude who look to have sit in combine for any special form of *puja*, possibly in search of a victory in a specified war, with pomp and grandeur (as pomp and grandeur being represented here in a sequence of dance and music. Similarly, war being represented here to the next sequence where a man rides on a horse with his open sword). The war was successful where he made a man captive (this being referred to an another sequence in which the same warrior looked to have subdued a person i.e. the captive one by triggering his sword). And then only to the next one, there is the sequence of our concern where the war captive look to be sacrificed in front of the pot bellied deity. In this regard it is interesting to observe that the angle in which man raised his *khadga* is perpendicularly straight to the neck of the person which is supportive enough to
call it as being a scene of human sacrifice. Apart from that another confusion that roam around this explanation, is the identities of this pot bellied personality whom we considered to be a deity. First and foremost problem that we have found regarding the identity of this deity is the erosion. It is the erosion which caused him to have a shape of a Ganesh. Despite of that the figure look to have hold a ‘Surahi’ or a bowed in his left hand from which he drink something with the help of a pipe which ultimately (because of the pressure of the age long erosion) has assumed the shape of a trunk to misinterpret the figure as being the deity of Ganesh. In support of this consideration it can further be said that the trunk of the Ganesh never be the tapered one towards the upward as it now looked to be in case of this figure, rather it is bigger in size. Again a deity holds a khadga in his right hand, commemorating a volatile concept in which any form of sacrifice seemed to be acceptable to him. Thus, the god though have an unidentified status but still he may be considered as the guardian of virility possibly of sexual potency, symbolized here in mating couple of the animal. In search of that potency to gain victory in a war or to win over an enemy, men belonging to higher strata of the society even dared to sacrifice human being however of the war captive.

Regarding the selection of the human sacrifice, the Kalika Purana has clearly stated that the defeated enemy specifically the son of the defeated king can be considered as an item of sacrifice. Though the Kalika Purana and the Yogini Tantra have provides vivid description of human sacrifice, but the amount of their popularity in the Assamese society yet to be

ascertained. Historically it is known that in the *Tamreshwari* temple as well as some tribal people have pursued the human sacrifice in Assam which was continued even to the age of the *Ahom* King Gaurinath Singha.¹⁵⁹

**K) Preparation of Genital Organ and Bestiality:**

Apart from that, a limited number of architectural component, as scattered all along the temple ranges at Madan-Kamdeva have also bore some interesting erotic representation. One such broken architectural component, now kept casually on the left hand side of the broken door jamb, at of the entrance gate of the *garbha griha* of the main temple. Survived only with two sequences, this architrave (fig 17.1) have showed in its first sequential division a sitting male on a stool with his straight out stressed leg, while an woman well accommodate herself in between his two legs, as if she engaged in preparing his genital organ for any act of actuality. Thus, after being received with sufficient excitement with the activities of the woman, the male went for a kill as it referred to the second sequence of our concern. In describing these representations chignon and that of female type to both these person have created a confusion and that is why it appeared to any visitor in his first sight as a scene of homosexuality. But, after minute observation the absence of the sign of the breast have inspired us to consider the sitting person as being a male one. Now regarding the question of the presence of chignon to the male it is interesting to note that the keeping of long hair to make

a knot out of that was a common practice of the male,\textsuperscript{160} if not the later but at least to the period assigned to the great Guptas. Regarding the tradition of maintaining long hair Indian sastras have instructed that the man whether male or female should shaved their head only to a region marked to the end point of the tarjani finger as measured to a full fledged stress of the fore and thumb finger just from the bridge point of the nose and accordingly the hair to the rest of the portion of the head should never be shaved and naturally that was sufficient enough to have a knot out of that.\textsuperscript{161} This tradition of maintaining long hair is continued even to the later period, but with the passes of time it was synchronized only to some special occupant of the samskara ridden society who intended to have their uniqueness only with the help of their long hair. As for example the Brahman priests have possessed a tuft of hair even today also, on the crown of their head in the fond memory of the age old tradition of maintaining long hair. In any Sakta tantric form of puja, the priest first has to composed auspicious tuft in the form of a chignon as he believed, in search of his self defiance.\textsuperscript{162} Apart from the priestal community there are some other people in the society who also have long hair and thus tried to identify themselves normally in connection of some magic-religious cultural occasion of the society. One such occupants are the deodha of deodhani nritya, a popular magico-religious dance form of lower Assam, where a deodha, generally a male performer, has long hair and get the audience as being a

\textsuperscript{160} Iyyar, N.G.(tr.) : Brihat Samhita, 1987, p.108.
\textsuperscript{161} Smrititirtha, Sri Krishnachandra, Purohitdarpan, 1922, p.126.
\textsuperscript{162} Infomant, B.N. Sarma, Age-63,Nalbari.
prophet (far sighter) at the grace of the god. This has taken place actually on the last part of his dance performance when he starts doing some unnatural behaviour which attract the visitor towards his vocabulary. Another important point to note about this deodhani nritya is that it has taken place on the occasion of any blooded Tantric form of Sakti puja in auspicious place, like Kamakhya. Above all there is also a popular believe that hair actually have a magical power in its possession. On the basis of that discussion we can safely presumed that the male must have to be a person of special identity, if not stand in association of any Tantric ideology but at least to magic-religious sentiment.

Another such causally kept architectural component to the main temple plinth has also beared a scene of bestiality(fig. 9.5) where a deer like animal mate by a male from the rear. Up till now the explanation of the scene of bestiality is not possible except a safe consideration put forwarded by D. Desai that these are the symbolic representation of fertility rites. Whatever might be the fact-the matter is now confirmed that there are two type of bestial scene at Madan-Kamdeva, in one an animal mate with a woman(fig.12.1) (as describe earlier) and in other a man mate with an animal(fig. 9.5). Both these cases, the rear half appeared to be the most preferred portion to expose.

SECTION : 4.6

Summarizing Note :

Thus, the study reveals some important points to note about the erotic embellishment at Madan-Kamdeva. First, the temple structure have provided a very limited space to incorporate
erotic imageries. Secondly, the sculptor have showed a good sense of geometric knowledge in accommodating their erotic dreams of divergent varieties within the limited space that they have for the same. In terms of nature of composition, it is important to note that the erotic sculpture available here at Madan-Kamdeva are more or less secular in nature and reflects primarily the life of a specific communities. The sculptors here tried to execute those pro-Tantric ritualistic scenes which were commonly visible to the general public and which had not hampered the very concept of Tantric esoterism.

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