CHAPTER - VI
In this chapter, we would like to cite in brief, some important features of those aesthetic products available at Madan-Kamdeva, thus to confirm a slot for them to the whole paragon of Indian plastic tradition. For such an objective, a study with a comparative appreciation often found to be the most precise and result oriented alternative. But the comparative analysis of aesthetic product always proved to be a matter of great complicacy because of the subjective appellation of each and every aesthetic product.\(^1\) So, we tried here to deal the matter only in terms of physiognomy and iconographical standard of those available sculptural products, while ignoring the very subjective part of analyzing their aesthetic values as far as possible. For the sake of comprehensiveness of the study, we are very much selective in choosing the aesthetic items of other Indian states (with whom we would like to compare the product of Madan-Kamdeva) and accordingly, concentrate only on those aesthetic find spot which are being popularly cited in comparison of Madan-Kamdeva, like Khajoraho,\(^2\) Orissa and great Pala-Sena School of art of Bengal. The iconography of Surya Sculpture, on the other hand, also inspired us to bring the product of some of the south Indian Schools within the periphery of our comparative study. Above all we would also like to introduced the products of Madan-Kamdeva (in a comparative node) with some other important aesthetic items, available or collected from different

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1. Aesthetic appellation very person to person, causing a diversified direction while analyzing an aesthetic product.
2. Madan-Kamdeva is popularly known as the Khajoraho of Assam.
archaeological sites of Assam proper. With all these criterions, we further like to deal the matter in a composite manner that means, instead of being restricted ourselves only with the sculptural issues, we would like to have a brief discussion about the possible forms of the temples at Madan-Kamdeva and their specific features, so to have some directions at least in framing the study of our comparative analysis.

SECTION : 6 : 1

Madan-Kamdeva in a Brief Architectural Preview:

Relics of a group of adjacent temples along with the edifices of some scatteredly located religious monuments (Covering the peaks and the ridges of the hilly enclaves of Madan-Kamdeva) are the main attraction of this famous archaeological site of our discussion. But unfortunately, except a superficial plinth structure (whome we considered as the main temple) no other compact form of architectural remains are there to attract our attention. And now the site survive only with some rudimentary basement arrangement (explored) along with some other architectural component, certainly of some majestic temples of our glorious past. These limitations though have made it now quite difficult to have an idea about the actual form of the temple at Madan-Kamdeva but still, the aesthetic items like temple lintel, door sills, over and above the angasikhara and the main temple plinth etc provides a scope at least to make a presumption about the possible forms of the temples of this great centre of plastic activities.

From stylistic point of view, the temple building activities of India's glorious past can be classed in three categories
ie the Nagara, the Dravida and the Vesera. Of them, the Nagara is a north Indian temple making style, the Dravida is a form of south Indian temples and the Vesera is a typical pattern of some of those south Indian temple complexes. However, that classification can't be appropriated to the geographical parameter of Indian subcontinent, as the existence of these temples often found beyond the periphery of their respective region and accordingly the classification should better be made simply as northern, southern and deccani type of temple, instead of incorporating a concept of region with them.³

The temple of Madan-Kamdeva seem to be the edifices of the north Indian temple style. The ground plan and the elevation in the form of Sikhara are two of the distinctive feature of north Indian temple.⁴ The elevation part of a north Indian temple starts from mula (terrace) and accordingly it moves upward with the masuraka (pinth), the Jangha (wall), the Kapota (cornice), the Sikhara the gala (neck), the amalaka and ultimately the kumbha.⁵ From the Orissan point of view, the elevation part of a temple starting from the basement have four broad divisions i) the pista which includes mula and masuraka of earlier division ii) the bada which includes Jangha and the cornice section iii) the gandi which includes sikhara iv) and ultimately the mastaka comprises of gala or beki, amalaka, kumbha and the dhvaja (fig.21.4)

In their present state of condition, it is quite difficult to make any projection about the elevation part of the temples at

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Madan-Kamdeva. But fortunately, the surviving plinth of the main temple provides an opportunity to make an assumption about the horizontal or the ground plan of these temples (fig.21.3). Accordingly, these temples are square in type, with number of graduated projections on the exterior to creates a dreaming atmosphere of light and shade for the visitor. This plan has further made a suggestion about the existence of two adjacent super structure in composing the temple ie the *garbha griha* and the *mandapa*.

The re-entrant angles of an Indian temple at the cornice and its projecting parts, in combine, termed as the *rathaka* or the *pratirathaka* arrangement. Depending on number of such angle and projection, these temples are again classified as *pancharatha*, *saptaratha* and *navaratha* temple. Accordingly, at least the main temple at Madan-Kamdeva appeared to be a temple of *pancharatha* arrangement, with the extension of two projection on each sides. Along with these *pancharathaka* arrangement, it is horizontal mould in diminutive order, starting from the base to the lowest point of *jangha* (culminating point), which further attenuated the diversified effect of light and shade to the visitors. Apart from that, another interesting feature of the temples at Madan-Kamdeva is that one of the horizontal mould of the plinth is decorated with a typical Assamese type of *kiritamukha* design. Just above the *kiritamukha* designs, there is another strip, comprises of number of sculptural sequences, describing the life of specific communities as explained in earlier chapter.

In its present state of condition, though it is quite difficult to have a confirm idea about the elevation part of the
temples at Madan-Kamdeva, but there are some architectural items which provides us a rough idea about the all probable forms of the temples of this site. Among them, a lintel with miniature temple motif (fig. 18.3) and the conserving angasikhara (fig. 18.1) are the most important item to consider i) Accordingly, the angasikhara has made a reflection about the fact that there was no horizontal division to the jangha section of the temples at Madan-Kamdeva. Instead of that, the temples seem to have beared big square sized sculptured niches to decorate three either sides of the entrance gate of the temples. This type of arrangement of the wall, remembering us to a concept of Dashavatara temple at Deogarh of 6th century A.D. The angasikhara, ii) has further made a suggestion about the continuance of the same rathaka plan to the culminating point (beki) of the Sikhara iii) similarly, the perpendicular section of the wall suggested to be terminated in a moulded varanda which had an outer projection of its own and this provides sikhara, a more wider area of coverage for its smooth curvilinear elevation. iv) Referring to an another provision, the angasikhara has made an indication about the existence of a large kiritamukha motif to decorate the lower half of the raha page (just above the varanda), while suggesting creepers design to the anuratha and other corresponding parts of the rathaka plan including kanika paga at the corners. v) Similarly, it also suggest another interesting module of the sikhara where a dhyani Buddha type of sculpture affix to decorate the finial part of the sikhara. In this way, if anagasikhara is considered as a miniature temple replica, the super structure of the temples at Madan-Kamdeva seem to have reached its culmination with an amalakasila, which
supports kumbha and dhavaja in its glory. Thus summarizing the discussion about the basic structural part of the temples at Madan-Kamdeva, there is a common feature to observe that like in other parts of India, no mortar had been used while joining each stone block, instead of that all these were kept in position by means of their weight and balance, aided by a system of interlocking flanges.

Accordingly, from the architectural point of view the continuous ridges of the rathaka plan starting from the plinth to the sikhara, inspired to place these temple provisions at Madan-Kamdeva in a close proximity of the rekha deul structure of the Orissan architecture. Secondly, with their fourth and fifth character, the temples at Madan-Kamdeva also visualized two of the unique Odisy features, (however, with some minor variation) in their creation. There are some temples in Orissa whose sikhara being decorated with large kiritamukha design and topped by a seated figure of Lakulisha. Though, the angasikhara at Madan-Kamdeva failed to suggest the crowning image as being the Lakulisha one, but still the arrangement placed them near to an Orissan concept of architecture. Suggesting a curvilinear elaboration along with proportionate extension of the sikhara with the other parts of the body of the temple, the miniature temple form carve on the lintel, over viewing some sorts of similarities with the Mukteswar temple of Orissa of 900 A.D. This presumption is also made confirmed by Dr. P.C. Sarma, one of the pioneer in

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7. This type of arrangement is more appropriately exposed to the Parashurameshwara temple in Orissa.

the field of the study of ancient Assamese architecture. However, in confirming this proposition, one should have to keep in mind a generalized view put forwarded by an another eminent scholar, Dr. R. D. Choudhury that the Orissa style of art has a subsidiary role to play while extending its influence to the Assamese plastic tradition. But the repeated observation reveals that at least from the architectural point of view, the temples at Madan-Kamdeva have beared much more resemblance with the Orissan architectural style. Along with the Orissan dalliance, the existence of long architrave with pilastered niches as occupied by the deities are some of the other architectural features of the temple at Madan-Kamdeva which place them near to a Khajoraoho configuration. However, in accepting this view we have some reservation that the so called influence of Khajoraoho style of architecture is certainly not to dominate the structural part of the temple, its influence survived only in organizing some minor but important architectural component of the temple at Madan-Kamdeva. Thus the matter can be summerised in the following word that the temples at Madan-Kamdeva appeared to be the unique bearer of two dominant architectural traditions first the Orissa and then only the Khajoraoho style of architecture.

10. The third and last period (1100 – 1250 A.D.) of Orissa style is represented by a number of medium sized temples all remarkable for the richness and finish of their appearance Sastri, N. : A History of South India, 1975, p.479.
The construction of medium sized temple further reterate the influence of an Orissan concept of architecture at Madan-Kamdeva.
Along with that, the temples at Madan-Kamdeva appeared to be the true bearer of the concept of Buddhist chaitya arch tradition. Number of scattered architectural lintel are there at Madan-Kamdeva which have pilastered niche of chaitya arch type at their centre. A semi circular cylinder, decorated with human figure, encircled by the vegetal pattern, attached to the central panel of the existing door sill\textsuperscript{12} (fig.18.4), now lying at the entrance of the main temple plinth, on the other hand, issued a direction about a proactive tradition of vegetal pattern, once popular to the Indian aesthetics, during the pre-Kushana period. Above all these directions, the iconography specially of the Surya sculptures (as discuss earlier) have instructed another extension to the horizon of the comparative analysis even to that of the south Indian antiques. In organizing a comparative analysis one should also have to remember the influence of Pala-Sena tradition survived as a heavy weight feature almost to the entire proceeding of the Assamese plastic tradition through the ages.

**SECTION : 6.2 Madan-Kamdeva in Comparison:**

A) **With Khajoraho :**

In view of these directions, first we would like to scrutinized the matter of resemblance of the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva with that of the sculptures of Chandella or Khajoraho group of temples. Representing a phase of culmination of the central Indian building activities, Khajoraho with harmonious

\textsuperscript{12} At present, it is quite difficult to identify the exact pattern of the sculpture attached to the cylinder at the central part of the doorsill. This perception is primarily based on an earlier observation made by Dr. P.C. Sarma.
integration of its sculptural as well as architectural arrangements have expounded a profound exuberance of human warmth to its overall sculptural composition which is parallel none only to that of the Orissa sculptures.\textsuperscript{13}

Without going into much details the study first intended to have those basic point on which the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva differs with that of Khajoraho. Accordingly, the conscious movement and the flexion or the twist of the body along the line of their axis, are two of the most attractive features of the sculptures of Khajoraho. Similarly, the bodies, specially of the female sculptures at Khajoraho often turned towards the wall with exposed buttocks to the spectator, and the whole arrangement contorted in such a way that the face appears in profile. Such profile exposure of the face along with unnatural twist of the body and the wrench of the tubular limbs, almost to a breaking points at their joints\textsuperscript{14} as witnessed in case of the sculptures of Khajoraho, are some of the totally absent features here at Madan-Kamdeva uptill now. Apart from that, though a sense of roundness is here to work in executing sculptures at Madan-Kamdeva, this roundness, never attain the mastery of the Khajoraho product. At Khajoraho, the sculptors tried to attain the sense of roundness for their products by attaching them to the wall with a small section of stone, but that technique has not found its application in case of the sculptures at Madan-Kamdeva. Another important point on which people often search the similarity between these two great centre of aesthetic activities is their erotic sculptures. The erotic

\textsuperscript{13} Deva, K. : Op-cit, 1997, pp.53,56,57.

sculptures at Khajuraho can categorically be discussed under two
sub-headings—one symbolizing the perfect uniorj of cosmic
principles and other representing sexual orgy in the form of group
sex. While representing the first group of erotic sculptures
(mithuna in nature), the sculptors at Khajuraho have showed their
utmost sincerity in terms of introducing them with all necessary
perfection of human feelings as well as to the concept of the beauty
of love when they executed entwined couples. With exaggerated
curves and warm approach to each other, these couples are about
to involved in a supernatural activities of love out of a deep sense
of affection to each other. Along with the unnatural bend of the
bodies, the sculptor at Khajuraho tried to attain the cosmic
standard through the appreciation of their physical charm in
affection. But, such warm appreciation found to be rear phenomenal
exposure to those of the mithuna sculpture available here at Madan-
Kamdeva uptill now. Here the sculptors, instead of showing an
exaggerated emphasis to represent the charm of a supra natural
physical affection, tried to extract the ideal of the cosmic union
with the help of popular symbolic representation i.e. by placing
the couple on the heap of the lotus. Similarly in depicting maithuna
sculpture also, there is a mark difference between Khajuraho and
Madan-Kamdeva. In Khajuraho, the maithuna sculptures more of
less have a religious appropriation specially in the form of group
sex. Scholar like Vidya Dehejia like to call them as the true
exposure of kaula or kapalika tradition. While accepting this
view it should be kept in mind that the presence of erotic motif was

not necessarily connected with sectarian affiliation, rather the sectarian affiliation did influence the extent to which this form of decoration was permitted.\textsuperscript{17} Whatever might be the fact—in case of representing sexual orgy, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva failed to have any acute religious sentiment behind their execution and their representation have beared amative character of the palatial life of an aristocratic community of Kamrupa at one time (as stated earlier). Only one sequence is there to the \textit{narathara} section of the main temple plinth where a pig like creatures involved in deep sexual activities and thus impress the observer with an ideal of fertility rites as explained earlier. At Khajoraho also we have some palatial orgies, but they are all in group form and acute in nature comparing to that of the sculptures at Madan-Kamdeva.

Despite of all these differences there are some similes between the sculptural centre of these two sites of our discussion. Like Khajoraho, Madan-Kamdeva also the sculpture grew increasingly stereotyped \textit{which means a thinning down of the inner vision and consequent and corresponding loss of plastic sensitivity. But it revealed the sensuous charm that resides in physical body and impart to all figures a somewhat mechanical grace and conscious perfection}.\textsuperscript{18} Tall, slim (often) elongated limbs, broad hips, shapely breast are some of the other common characteristic feature shared by the sculptural product of both these sites. Diaphanous garment\textsuperscript{19} and identical trait of the Saranath idiom look to be a dearing tradition of the

\textsuperscript{17} Desai, D. : \textit{Erotic Sculpture of India}, 1985, p.50.
\textsuperscript{18} Majumdar, R.C. : \textit{Struggle for Empire}, 1957, p.656.
\textsuperscript{19} In case of Khajoraho there are however some wavey lines on the body of the sculpture to indicate drapery which again appeared to be a rear phenomenon in case of the sculptures at Madan-Kamdeva.
plastic product available in both these sites. Like Khajoraaho, the ornamental elaboration of the body of the sculptures also seem to be a less concerning matter for the sculptors worked here at Madan-Kamdeva and they are satisfied only with the repetition of the stereotype ornaments like necklaces, anklets, armlets, different type of head-gears, grides and with occasional appearances of urudomas made out of hanging pearls from the waist gridles, as witnessed more specifically in case of the sculpture of Indra, conserved to the site museum. While explaining the similarities it should however be remembered that these are not the unique features to share between Khajoraaho and Madan-Kamdeva, rather these are common almost to all medieval Indian School of plastic tradition. Thus from technical point of view there are very little to compare the aesthetic product of Madan-Kamdeva with that of Khajoraaho. The erosion and belated conservation has further diminished the scope for the comparative study between these two great centre of plastic activities.

B) With Orissan Product:

While turning our head from Khajoraaho to Orissa, it is interesting to observe that like architecture, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva specially in terms of shape, size, posture have beared much more similarity with the sculptural embellishment of the Orissan temples. Orissan or the Odissy sculptures are best known for their sensuous expression. Without applying any

20. However there are some minor differences regarding the size and elaboration. As for example the head gears at Khajoraaho appeared to be more decorative in nature comparing to that of Madan-Kamdeva.
exaggerated twist, the Orissan sculptors have successfully carved out a sensuous charm for their product, which is more expressive in their female product with heavily laden breast, poisy organized fleshy abdomen, exposed nipple, navel, appealing lips and more appropriately with their seminude status. Similarly here at Madan-Kamdeva also the sculptors by maintaining almost the same physiognomical standard tried to attained a sensuous charm for their product. In explaining the fact the sculpture of Devi Saraswati in the site museum found to be the most nearer example of Orissan dalliance at Madan-Kamdeva. However, despite of its close affinity with the Orissan maiden, still a mark difference is there specially in terms of the smooth accommodation of the curve of the body. In case of Orissa, the bodily curve of the upper part of a female sculpture, while representing a bhanga posture have found due accommodation from the lower half of the body of the sculpture. But at Madan-Kamdeva, that accommodation look to be distorted with static appreciation from the lower half of the body of the sculptures. Apart from that, another important feature of the Orissan sculpture is that their arms reaching almost to the knees.21 This type of elongation though not appeared to be a popular feature for the sculpture of Madan-Kamdeva, still there are some product in which the sculptures, knowingly or unknowingly tried to materialized this feature, however without distorting their prime obligation for proportionate representation. The sculpture of Dvarapala (as identified earlier) in the site museum is the best found example of this type of representation here at Madan-Kamdeva. In this representation, the Dvarapala tried to maintain

the balance of his *tribhanga* posture with elongated arm, where he hankered his hand around the knees. Along with that there is a group of short and stout version of sculpture conserved to the site museum which had reflected the Orissan dalliance with their full and rounded face, short and broad nose and robust limb.

Above all, it is the erotic sculptures which revealed a symptomatic closeness between these two centre of plastic activities in their execution. One of the basic peculiarity of the Orissan erotic art is that like in-central and western India, it does not portray maithuna in acrobatic and clumsy poses rather they are more aristocratic in appearances. Sharing this view, the erotic art at Madan-Kamdeva also refuse to capitalize any sexo-yogic posture in their delineation and similarly as in Orissa, here also the sculptor tried to have an aristocratic mood for their erotic product. However, they tried to attain the same not through their glamarous appearances as one can witnessed in Orissa, but through their sequential demonstration representing life of creamy layer of the society. But the most striking similitude exist between the erotic representations of Madan-Kamdeva and Orissa is that both the centre shared the tradition of placing mithuna and maithuna sculpture on the lotus pedestal. However, uptill now at Madan-Kamdeva, there is only the mithuna sculpture whom being represented on the heap of lotus pedestal, again with some minor innovation i.e. in the form of making the pedestal out of a lotus creeper. Apart from that, all along the Odissy belt, the erotic sculpture appeared to be more exotic and frank (in size and

appearance) to the spectator, comparing to that of the sculpture available at Madan-Kamdeva.

Like erotic sculpture, the animalistic representation, particularly the fantastic hybrid monster notably the *Gajasimha* motif, have shared the essence of commonality. Marked by same sense of dynamism, this motif at Madan-Kamdeva however have some regional variation in terms of their composition. Similarly, the presence of *Gana* and their shape as the weight lifter with squat body, also highlight a sense of resemblance between these two aesthetic tradition. However, except the coarse form of *Gana*, which is nothing but a regional version of indigenous plastic tradition, the other *Gana* as found in the site museum is the miniature replical formation of Orissa *Gana* (fig. 9.7).

Despite of all these similarities, in reference to Konark, there is striking difference between these two centre of aesthetic activities that while carving a sculpture of any major deities like *Surya*, the Orissan sculptor often showed preference to their installation only in companion of his or her accessory deities. In doing this they tried to maintain the balance between the realization of the form as a plastic mass and the extreme delicacy and precision in carving ornamental accessories which enhance the fullness and the sculptural character of the smooth surfaces of the seminude body on which they are strung. This feature is totally unknown to the overall sculptural embellishment of Madan-Kamdeva. Thus the discussion can be summarized in the following words that if not all, at least some sculptures at Madan-Kamdeva have beared symptomatic semblance with the Orissan tradition of art.

C) **With Pala Sena Art:**

Now endeavoured to scrutinize the influence of *Pala-Sena* art form, one has to be cautious primarily because of the reservation already put forwarded by the scholar like M. Dutta that from stylistic point of view the sculptural embellishment at Madan-Kamdeva exist here in total avoidance of the influence of the East Indian School of Medieval Art. It is known to all that the rise of EISMA is solemnized with the establishment of *Pala* empire in Bengal and Bihar proper during 8th century A.D. Introducing a fresh lease of life mainly to the winning Buddhist art and culture in India, this art form in its later phase i.e. during the course of the *Sena* period tried to have a simultaneous elaboration of the concept of Saivism in their production. In actuality the *Pala* School of art developed out of a Gupta school of variety i.e. of the Saranath idiom, *in other word with the decline of the Guptas as a Political force, and with the rise of independent kingdom, a regional school of art started coming into being in Bengal, though grounded on Indian classical tradition.*

There are three different stages of development for the *Pala-Sena* school of art. Accordingly, the sculpture of the first stage characterized with heavy bodily forms, though with delicacy of feature in the icons and other sculptures. Here the refine sensuousness of the eastern trend is noticed, derived from Saranath School. The second group is with heaviness of forms and third one is very heavy, the execution being rather crude though showing natural features.

27. Ibid, p. 349.
Generally characterized with voluptuous sensuousness, animation, elegance, rigid mechanical lavishness and more often with exaggerated decoration, this aesthetic tradition certainly have enjoyed an opportunity to exploit the scope of its geographical proximity in terms of extending its obligation to the existing plastic tradition of Assam. Along with that, there is also a chronological matching between these two art tradition (i.e. between Madan-Kamdeva and the Pala-Sena aesthetic tradition). These two factors inspired the study to scrutinized the matter again and again and ultimately it is interesting to find that despite of all those reservations of the scholars, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva seem to have beared some minor insignia of this high profile aesthetic tradition here and there in their explanation. Some of those minor bearings are as follows–first like the images of the Pala-Sena tradition, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva are also the true exponent of an overwhelming sense of passionate feeling in their exposure.28 However, when they are more prone to the medieval aesthetic sensation and stand almost in opposition of Gupta classicalism,29 the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva on the other hand adorned with Saranath classicalism at least to the arena of their technical exposure (as explained already in earlier chapter).

The sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva though refuse to excel with tense and nervous character of the Pala-Sena tradition, Yet it continued with a promising suave elegance as witnessed in

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28. This feature is however common to some of the other medieval Indian school of art like Khajoraho.
29. Ibid.
case of *Pala-Sena* sculpture. However, the continuance of this concept certainly not here to indicate their obligation to this high profile aesthetic tradition as the inheritance of this gracious character can always be assigned with great tradition of *Gupta* classicalism. Then, what *Pala-Sena* tradition did with the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva? It simply strengthen the ideal of graciousness in terms of creating a differentiation in between the autochthonous and sophisticated art tradition of this land. This fact is more clear with the existence of those sculptures in dancing mood, where they stand totally in rejection of the gracious character, comparing to that of the other sculptures in the site museum at Madan-Kamdeva. (Fig.12.7). Again the *Pala-Sena* art is a product of stately repose and contemplative clam. But still the curve of their body as witnessed specially in case of the later age products appeared to be more fickle comparing to that of the earlier product. Some fickleness is also visible in some of the sculptures here at Madan-Kamdeva like the sculpture of goddess *Lakshmi*. However, majority number of sculptures of this site have beared a sense of heaviness in their appearances along with the exposition of their robust bodily form. It appeared to be an artificial exposition, which can more appropriately be termed as an imbibed concept of the stately repose of contemplative clam of the *Pala-Sena* tradition.

Similarly, like the *Pala-Sena* sculptures, here at Madan-Kamdeva also the sculptures have beared flat and broad faces with pointed chin which has attained almost the form of a

betal leaf shape. But on the other had the sculpture of Madan-Kamdeva though refused to depict the 'triangular shape of the mouth with corners raised high into the cheek like that of the Pala-Sena sculpture but still with crescent shape mouth as in case of goddess Lakshmi, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva tried to have maintain another angle of proximity with the Pala-Sena sculpture in composition. Giving more wider appropriation to this physiognomical feature of the Pala-Sena sculpture of triangular shape mouth, there are two other sculptures of Ganga and Yamuna in the site museum, as identified already in earlier chapter.

Along with these similarities the most important difference that the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva have beared with that of the Pala-Sena sculptures is that During the Pala-Sena period the relief becomes more and more independent from its background. But, that tendency failed to impressed the sculptors work here at Madan-Kamdeva as all the figure remain flat and compressed into the surface. Apart from that though majority number of sculptures here being curve out on a stella form of background, their supple roundness suffered (comparing to that of the Pala-Sena sculpture) as because of their compressionate attachment with the background. Despite of being curved out on a stella form of background no such accessory deities are there to adorne with the primary one as we have in case of the Pala-Sena throne carriage or stella of the deities. Again the subjective conceptions of Indian images

32. Ibid.
33. Ibid, p. 452.
could hardly be represented in terms of a physically perfect healthy human body. It could only be symbolized in an ideal type and by forms not strictly in accordance with known physiological laws, but rather by forms which transcend the limit of ordinary human anatomy.\textsuperscript{34} And accordingly, Indian sculptors had paid little importance while conjugating lower half of a body of the sculptures. This fact is more prone to the sculptures of Madan-Kamdev. The \textit{Pala-Sena} sculpture in the matured phase of their development while have successfully translated the idea of \textit{kadalikandam}, in executing thigh and idea of the shape of a fish, \textit{Matshyakritih} in executing \textit{jangha},\textsuperscript{35} the portion below the knee, the same principle have not found due consecration here at the Madan-Kamdev, rather they look to be obliged to an archaic tradition of terracotta origin as observed in case of the \textit{Surya} icon of the first group of our discussion in earlier chapter. All the figures at Madan-Kamdeva are being executed in low and flat relief. With rigid frontality and shape angles they have a linear effect in their composition and not the slightest possible attempt is here to observe while rounding of their contour. Along with that with broad and heavy shoulders, almost in a straight line and with the elbow making sharp angles all these sculptures of these above mention group can better be compared with the prematures phase of the \textit{Pala-Sena} sculpture of Kushana delineation.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, p. 307.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Kadalikandam and Matshyakritih– two of the best example of the translation of nature into art Bharatiya Silpat Murti-(tr.) B. Dutta from A. Thakur, Assam Academy 1975, pp. 20-21.

\textsuperscript{36} Majumdar, R.C.(ed.) : \textit{History of Bengal}, 1943, p. 521.
Thus, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva though have bore no such mark influence of Pala-Sena tradition in their execution, but still they failed to refuse the wave of this high profile tradition as the stigma of that aesthetic laws survived here a Madan-Kamdeva component wise.

**D) With some Deccanese and South Indian School:**

Though the iconography of the Surya sculptures have made an indication about the possible existence of south Indian influence in consecrating some of those sculptures available here at Madan-Kamdeva, but their specification is now an impossible task to achieve, except some generalized view to conclude.37 The term 'South Indian inspiration', mean to state here an impulse hailed form the artistic movements of Peninsular India, occurred under the aegis of some of those great dynasties like Pallavas, Cholas, Rashtrakuta, Hoysala etc. (without differentiating them as deccanese or as south Indians).

Starting with the Pallavas, who dominate south Indian politics for about two centuries (i.e. from 7th century A.D. to that of the early part of the 9th century A.D) were the real initiator of the great artistic movement in the Tamil land.38 Their architecture and sculpture constitute a most brilliant chapter in the history of south Indian art.39 A balance and well integrated execution along with the

37. That means we can bring out only some similarities but that can't be explained as a hailing influence to exert here at Madan-Kamdeva.
38. The history of Indian architecture and sculpture in the south begins at the close of 6th century under Pallavas.
application of a restrained movement in their composition to enhance poise and dignity of their product, singly as well as collectively, are some of the primary characteristic features of the sculptures of Pallavas.\(^{40}\) The open air relief at Mamalipuram provides the best possible explanation of these features. The most significant character of this relief execution is that the artist refused here to accept any artificial barrier and accordingly used entire height of the massive boulder as the ultimate limit to realize their dream. Each of the figure in this relief execution are in specific mood and gesture and they are all executed in low relief. *The animals particularly, masterful portraits as they are, reveal the artist's sincere sympathy with and understanding of inherent nature and character of each species.*\(^{41}\) It is on this point i.e. the masterful execution of animal, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva seem to have beared a node of similarity with the Pallavas. The execution of a pair of pig in an erotic mood (fig.9.4) to the narathara section of the main temple plinth at Madan-Kamdeva is the best proved explanation of this fact. Like the Pallavas though they are not life size in execution, but their naturalistic approach would immediately caught the eyes of the visitor as if they are being the product of Pallava inspiration. Low relief with resilient and the balance form of execution are some of the other aesthetic concept prone to the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva. With slim and attenuated figure, the sculpture of Madan-Kamdeva, specially of the narathara section of the main temple plinth also refuse to have any quest for spirituality and instead of that they gave emphasis in depicting the joyous outburst of life however of a specified community.


\(^{41}\) Ibid, p. 171.
Like the Pallavas, the Rashtrakuta and the Chola were the two other political powers, who contributed a lot to the plastic activities of peninsular India. The Political dominancy of these two dynasties starts with the emergence of Rashtrakuta, during the 8th century A.D. and that was continued till the end of 13th century A.D., when Chola power was ultimately collapsed. Thus, the tenure of their rule had a contemporary status with the construction of the mighty temple complex of our concern. Apart from that, their active participation in the north Indian politics along with diplomatic moves (in terms of matrimonial alliances) initiated by the Kamrupi king (as it has been stated earlier) have further heightened the affinities of their closeness which in turn stimulate the matter of comparative analysis of the product of Madan-Kamdeva with that of the Rashtrakuta and the Cholas.

The Rashtrakuta dynasty, from being a feudatory of the Chalukyas of Badami, soon rose to become one of the supreme powers in the peninsular India under the able leadership of Dantidurga. The period of their rule being always remembered in the history as an age of Saivite revivalism. Crowded ornamentation with less emphasis on pose and expression are two of the identical feature of the sculptures of Rashtrakuta.

42. The Rashtrakuta had a coherent engagement in a tripartite struggle with the Pratiharas and the Palas for the mastery over north India.
Similarly, Chola king Rajendra Chola stated to have conquered major parts of north Indian tract including Bengal and Orissa, in between 1021-1025 A.D. and adopted a title 'Gangaikonda' in the fond memory of his victory (Baruah & Barua: Pracin Bharatar Itihas, 2005, p. 430).


The Kailasnath temple at Ellora, near Aurangabad in Maharashtra, is the most glorious monument of the Rashtrakuta. The basic point of similarity that the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva would like to share with the Rashtrakuta is that the sculpture hailed from both these sites gives little importance to their facial expression, but while the Rashtrakuta sculptures tried to compensate it with their vigorous pose and gestures, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva thoroughly refused to excel the same in their execution. Another interesting feature of the Rashtrakuta temple (which have bore a mark of similarity with the temple of Madan-Kamdeva) is that they have initiated the process of decorating their high basement with different sculptural works and design. This concept had found much more elaboration during the later stages of its development specially, under the Hoysala and Kakatiya. At Madan-Kamdeva also the stapatī has made a successful attempt to decorate their basement with different sculptural works and floral design. The only difference is that while the Rashtrakuta sculpture have showed their preference to the life size execution with a theatrical estimation in their overall presentation, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva though have failed to attain the height of that perfection, but still the way of execution of Goddess Tritia Tripura, in attachment of the basement of the surviving temple plinth, appeared to be an attempted derivation of Rashtrakuta’s (theatrical) inspiration.

On the other hand, the mighty Chola, though have conquered major parts of the north Indian tract, but they failed to

45. They tried to communicate their feelings, emotion with the visitor only through their pose and gestures.

maintain it for a long. Naturally, this has left them with limited opportunity to exert their influence in north Indian politics as well as to the trend of its aesthetic development. Despite of this limitation, it is interesting to have here at Madan-Kamdeva, some characteristic bearing Chola tradition. Accordingly, one of the primary characteristic feature of Chola temple architecture is the narrative panels. Like the Cholas, the sculptor at Madan-Kamdeva also attempted narrative sculpture in small panels. However, the Chola sculptor while trying to have them with some religious minutes, as in case of Ramayana Panels of Kampaharesvara temple at Tribuvanan, but at Madan-Kamdeva these panel concentration more in describing the life of specific community. The execution of the concept of humanism in sculpture is a primary contribution of the Cholas to the south Indian art.47 This, they have mainly with their 'portrait sculptures'.48 where they emphasized to differentiate the execution of king and other person with that of a god. The sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva though abstract in nature (that means, they did not like to differentiate the execution of king with that of a god) but still, they seem to have endorsed the concept of humanism in describing the life of people specially to the narathara section of the main temple plinth and to the sculpture of danapati with his wives (fig. 19.1). Apart from that, the conserving Angasikhara structure at the site museum, has also suggested another indication of similarity of the Chola architecture with that of the temple of Madan-Kamdeva. The Chola sculptor appreciated the values of the plain surface to the walls of

their temple as they did not like to crowd them with too many figures. The temples at Madan-Kamdeva also seem to have followed the tradition. However without having a compact structure of a wall, it is now quite difficult to ascertain it in a confirm manner. Above all, the excavation of two big Nataraja sculptures further illustrates the popularity of a hailing Chola concept of the cosmic dance of lord Sadaside here at Madan-Kamdeva, as the conception of Nataraja and his cosmic dance often referred to be a derivation of the Tamil land, specially of Chola period as the earliest depiction of Nataraja in stone and metal belong to this period.49

E) With Some Other Archaeological Find Spot of Assam Proper:

Within the period of domination of EISMA it is interesting to note that the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva exposed a grandour of classicalism in their stand.50 Though, the sculptures here have suggested a stiffness of attitude in their overall composition, but that stiffness can’t be compared with that of the EISMA as a sense of classical movement still persisted in composing the sculptures of this site of our concern.51 Working with the concept of classicalism, the sculpture, however tried here to expose primarily, a sense of mundane pleasure instead of being expressing the ideal of spirituality in their appearances. At the same time, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva with their robust bodily form expose a sense of strength coming from within to provide dignity and grandeur to their composition.52 Thus, the sculptures of this site

51. Ibid, pp 96-97.
52. Ibid, p. 97.
have derived the spirit of their execution in sturdier bodily form, that too in tight and in voluptuous modeling with flowing contours where the manifestation of inner experience exposed (only) to their drooping eyelids. Apart from that, a sense of breath (Pran) diaphanous garments etc are some of the other popular technique used here to divulge the concept of classicalism in execution of the sculptures of this famous archaeological site.

These ideals of classicalism normally inspired to go in search of similarity (if any) between the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva to that of other two sculptural site of Gupta classicalism i.e. the Dah Parvatia in Tezpur and Mikir Ati in Nagaon district of Assam. Dah Parvatia has an unique distinction to the cultural history of Assam as it possessed the ruins of the oldest temples of Assam belonging to the later Gupta period of 6th century A.D. equipped with emotional and sensuous contents. The Dah-Parvatia sculptures have beared an elegant stance at their exposure. Specially the female sculptures, with appropriate physiognomical details like slightly drooping breasts, smooth and resilient torso with a narrow middle, spreading hips, tapering thighs and legs, all held together by flowing sinuous contour, recalled the ideal female beauty as described by Kalidasa in his Meghduta.

Now comparing the sculptures of both these sites of our concern we have found that the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva have shared some of the aesthetic views of Dah-Parvatia in their production. Accordingly, the sculptors here at Madan-Kamdeva

53. Ibid, p. 98.
tried to execute a wasp curve while consecrating a narrow middle to their product. This is a technique which often found its application to introduce the product of Madan-Kamdeva with a sense of roundness. At Dah-Paravatia these wasp curve are more exotic and refine in nature and they are more vulnerable to the female sculptures. However, the sculptor at Dah-Parvatiia never used them to enhance the sense of roundness to their product as the concept of sophisticated classicalism has enough to make them as the best ever aesthetic production in Indian sub-continent. Similarly, spreading hips, tapering thighs are some of the other characteristic features shared by the sculptures from both these sites. However, at Madan-Kamdeva, the sculptor looked to be more successful in execution a sense of sensuousness with fleshy abdomen (appealing abdomen with exposed neval) comparing to that of the sculptures at Dah-Parvatia. On the other hand, like Dah Parvatia, the sculptures at Madan-Kamdeva also worked with a concept of breath, but comparing to former, the sculptor here to worked with limited opportunity while explaining a sense of pran to their product. Similarly, at Dah Parbatia sensuousness survived with drooping breast, while same being issued here at Madan-Kamdeva, with fleshy abdomen, exposed nipple (both in case of male and female). Instead of being drooping breast, the sculptor here at Madan-Kamdeva seen to be satisfied with rounded breast. In this way, while executing tapering thighs, the classical sculptor like to introduce the sense of fleshiness to the tapering thigh absorbed in tight volume. A smooth, easy and rounded contours of the transition part of the body from bust to abdomen are some of the primary characteristic feature of Dah-Parvatia classicalism which the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva never tried to attain.
All those differences that the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva have bore with that of Dah-Parvatia is probably because it was from 7th century A.D., the Gupta classical norms said to have lost its ground and as its immediate effect, the physiognomy of the sculptures became more heavier, despite a clarity in outline, the modeling seems to be more coarser, the face instead of being avoid, characteristically became squarish in refine. Mikir Ati sculptures of Nagaon district of Assam are the best available representative of this second stage development of Gupta classicalism in Assam. At Madan-Kamdeva also there are some sculptures which can be considered as the representatives of this second stage development of classicalism, however with some minor variation. It is the group of Surya sculptures (whom we considered to be the terracotta origin) which have duly exposed the second categorized classicalism with squarish face and square shoulder. Their facial appearances also have bore a similarity with the Mikir Ati Vishnu. However, comparing to Mikir Ati Vishnu, these Surya sculptures at Madan-Kamdeva are more lighter in volume. At the same time except the facial and the shoulder parts of the body, these sculpture failed to maintain the ideal of Mikir Ati classical heaviness.

Along with the ideal of classical dignity the Nataraja sculptures at Madan-Kamdeva with their insipient expression of their faces remembering us an expression of an image of Uma-Mahesvara collected from Doboka (Nagaon district) now conserve in Assam state museum, to highlight an impression of EISMA. Similarly some of the sculptures at Madan-Kamdeva with their smooth and resilient torso, while trying to maintain a sense of

elongation, have beared resemblance with some of the Ambari execution, as it witnessed in case of Surya sculpture collected to conserve in Assam state museum from Ambari.

Representing a lingering classical style, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva have beared the similarity with the sculptures of Kamakhya. M. Dutta has already stated that the Kamakhya sculptures are influenced by Madan-Kamdeva art style. That means Madan-Kamdeva is an earlier development of Kamakhya groups of sculptures. At Kamakhya, the sculpture though have maintained the basic physiognomical features of Madan-Kamdeva sculptures but they failed to attain that standard of conscious elegance as one can observe at Madan-Kamdeva.

Similarly, the sculptured panels, describing the life of an aristocratic community have also beared some sorts of similarities with the sculptured friezes of the Deo-Parvat ruins in present Golaghat district of Assam. Coming from the adhistana of a mandapa, the Deoparvat frieze describes in series the story drawn either from Hindu mythology or from domestic incidents including, few of an erotic character as in case of Madan-Kamdeva. Though Madan-Kamdeva panels failed to describe anything from the epic, but the way of their execution in case of explaining palatial life (erotic), normally highten the scope of this type of sculptural embellishment in Assam proper.

In this way the door sill, now at the entrance of the main temple plinth at Madan-Kamdeva is another item of

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commonality, as this type of sculptured architectural arrangement are found popularly in some other archaeological sites of Assam. The door sill found at Madan-Kamdeva is divided into five main panels. The panel at the centre have a semicircular cylinder, flanked by panels on either side, decorated with receding lion in sitting posture, as if they protected the vase (semi circular cylinder) in the central panel. This type of architectural arrangements are also found at Marar Park in Nagaon and in the Pingaleshwar ruins in Kamrupa (rural) district. The doorsills at Marar park at Nagaon is more simple in nature comparing to that of Madan-Kamdeva. It however, has maintain a close similarity with the Pingaleshwar door sill and that to in arrangement of the sculptural panels, on the either side of central cylinder. But in terms of refinement and polishness, this arrangement at Madan-Kadeva is more beautiful in nature comparing to that of Pingaleshwar. Apart from that the receding lion at Pingaleshwar and Marar Park have dragonic appearance while the same being represented here with a cat like appearance.

Thus, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva and its architectural arrangement have enjoyed more or less a pan Indian affiliation in their exposure. Starting from an age of classical dominancy, the sculptural products of this site lingering of the sophisticated classical style in collaboration of different regional aesthetic ideologies at their exposal.

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