CHAPTER - VII
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CONCLUSION

Philosophically, the study comprises of two parts. One part examine the sculptural products in terms of their iconography and physiognomy while the other parts deals with the matter of the their all possible sociological implication which to reveal some of the keen social issues of kamrupi society. Both parts of this ideological division of the study have certain conclusions.

The history of this majestic temple complex at Madan-Kamdeva still remain under the warp of an obscurity. Except an indirect literary reference in the Kalika Purana, no other form of evidences are there, (uptill now) to divulged the history of this famous temple site. However, people of this locality often tried to explain the antiquity of their proud possession in connection of a description available in the Yogini Tantra, about the celebration of kam-triodasi tithi in the month of chaita (March-April). As a subsidiary matter of our concern, the study reveal that this description actually has nothing to do with the historicity of this temple complex at Madan-Kamdeva. Similarly, the description of the Kalika Purana also found to be more explanatory only when some one cited the identity made by great Assamese poet Anada Chandra Agarwalla about Madan Kur, the nearby dead river of present Madan-Kamdeva as Swaswati and the hillock of the prime temple complex as Matshyadhvaj parvat as on abode of lord Vishnu in fish form.
Under such circumstances, confusions normally roam around the questions of its construction. Regarding the time of its consecration, the Directorate of Archaeology, Assam, like to call it as being a product of 11th/12th century A.D. But the physiognomical analysis of the sculpture instructed us a new wider range of chronological sequence for the construction of this temple complex. Accordingly, the study suggest an era from 9th to 12th century A.D. as the prime constructing period of this temples. Specifically, it was at least from the later half of the 9th century A.D., the construction of this magnificent temple complex was started which seem to be continued (in a more vigorous way) till the very end of 11th century A.D.

This wide range of chronological set up inspired us to bring some of the great rulers and ruling house to our consideration as they supposed to be the true sponsorer of this mighty temple complex. In its present context though it is quite difficult to ascertain the contribution of those rulers specifically but still a presumption can easily be made that these temples have certainly enjoyed the contribution of some of the great rulers of this land like Vanamaladeva (of Salastambha), Ratnapala (of Pala) etc.

On the other hand, the nature of aesthetic products also indicates the contributions of feudal lords and the merchant communities to the growth of this magnificent temple complex at Madan-Kamdeva. Throughout the courses of its history, Assam had witnessed a great tradition of feudal culture in its society. Starting from the time of great Bhutivarman, this tradition had attained almost a vigorous shape during the tenure of the great Pala rulers. It is generally accepted that Indian feudalism largely responsible
for the development of *Puratanadharma* and large scale temple building activities. Laizure and luxury often shifted their heads from their original functions and created around them a sensual atmosphere which being reflected to the walls of their prime construction in the form of erotic imageries. The temples of Madan-Kamdeva also have erotic imageries but they are not so acute and prominently exposed to the walls of the temples. It has two implications, one is political and other is religious. Politically it is the signal to the fact that feudalism in Assam had never attained the standard of other Indian parts where the feudal lords have the might to express their feelings more blatently to the walls of their constructions. Feudal lords in Assam, during the courses of its formative phase were mainly belonged to those migratory communities (officially *Brahman* by cast) who came here more often on invitation of rulers of this land, to open lands for agriculture with new techniques. Madan-Kamdeva is a product of the formative phase of feudalism in Assam, when the feudal lords only have a subsidiary status of the royalty. Under such circumstances, the patronizing zeal and the capabilities of those Assamese lords appeared to be low and it does'nt support the cause of any major constructions like Madan-Kamdeva at their auspices. The describing life to the *narathara* section of the main temple plinth, though have assured the linkages with a specific upper class communities in the society, probably of feudal lords, but the selected position for depicting the same

1. Desai, D. *Erotic Sculpture of India*, 1985, P. 146
2. The term formative phase used here to mean a period starting from the Bhuti varman to the rule of great Pala Sena dynesties in Kamrupa.
itself reflected a sense of hesitation in their execution. This has further reiterated the subsidiary participation of feudal lords in consecrating this temple complex at Madan-Kamdeva.

Comparing to those feudal lords, the participation of mercantile communities in creating this majestic temple complex appeared to be more trustworthy. The very location of the temple complex itself had enough potentiality to attract donation from the merchants hailed from different corners of India and abroad. Situated on a strategic point of an international highway starting from Margiana connecting the great silk route via Pataliputra, Samatata to the capital cities of Kamrupa, Madan-Kamdeva successfully emerged as socio-economic transit point, specially after the emergence of the last great capital cities of ancient Assam, Kamarupanagara, which was somewhere near the modern North Guwahati region. Thus, the location gave the site a national and international exposure. Not only the merchants official employed in different diplomatic mission who intended to make their visit to Kamrupa from different parts of the country and form abroad, certainly had come in contact of this beautiful site. The natural beauty of the site creates an impression in the mind of those capable visitors to contribute something to this temple complex, in the fond memory of their visit to Kamrupa and thus, to have some religious merit out of that. The possible explanation of divergent aesthetic views, more appropriately the exposition of south Indian iconographical traits in consecrating Surya sculptures is the best supporting evidence of this fact.
Refering to the question of its destruction, people often like to make Kalapahar, the great iconocluster, responsible for the same, which is nothing but a misnomer. Situated in an earthquake prone area like Assam, Kalapahar might have got limited opportunity to create any havoc to the complex of our concern, as the nature seem to have completed major part of this work that he intended to do here in Assam specially when we sighted the chronology of the occurrances of great earthquakes in Assam.

One of the primary objective of this study is to have the iconographical analysis of the sculptures. Because majority number of sculptures, even to the galleries of the site museum as well as to the main temple premises yet to have their identity in proper sense of term. Thus, the study has found the existence of different varieties of icons like Ganga, Yamuna, Vetala, Devi Tritria Tripura, Dvarapala etc. Similarly the study, when examine the identified stands of some of those sculptures to the galleries of the site museum, has found some doubtful iconographical explanation. As for example, the museum authority like to identify the sculpture with ten handed composition as an image of lord Vishnu, but our study found him as being an image of lord Vasudeva Lokeshvara. However, an execution of south Indian iconographical traits in consecrating some of the Surya sculptures to the galleries of the site museum is the most interesting revealation of the study which indirectly commemorate a nation wide linkage of the site. Similarly the study also found that the authority failed to explain the difference between the mithuna and maithuna sculptures as they
appeared to be satisfied simply by calling all those erotic imageries to the galleries as *maithuna* in nature.

As a part of subsidiary sculptural analysis the study when deals the matter of animal sculptures and the philosophy which to work behind their execution, has found some interesting revelation. One such interesting execution of animal sculpture found here at Madan-Kamdeva is a lion with a rat in its mouth. The real meaning behind this execution is quite confusing in nature and accordingly after examining the basic character of these two animals the study reveals that it was a totem symbolizing the power of mother goddess against the menance of rat, once prone to the human civilization.

Similarly, critical appreciation of erotic sculpture helps the study to introduced with number of socio religious issues of *Kamrupi* society. Like many other temples in Indian sub continent the erotic imageries at Madan-Kamdeva are also in *mithuna* and *maithuna* from of composition. Here also, the *mithuna* sculpture representing pre coital stage of an erotic life, have a divine exposure in their stands. But on the other hand, the *maithuna* sculpture available mainly to the *narathara* section of the main temple plinth, have beared a secular sensation in their exposure. In connection of depicting the life of a specific community in the society, these sculptures blatently exposed the haremian or palatial sex in their explanation. Unfortunately, no *hatha yogic* or acute erotic representations are there to observe at Madan-Kamdeva which may have indicated to the popularity of the concept of tantric esoterism in this tract of land. However, the erotic representation though refused to reflect
anything in appropriation at tantric sexual activities, but still there are some subsidiary execution which have duly highlighted the popularity of magico-religious concept of fertility rites in Kamrupa.

The gradation among the dancing women is the most important subsidiary revelation of the study of erotic sculptures. The sculptural sequence to the narathara section of the main temple plinth, beautifully explain the existence of three different classes of dancing women in our ancestral society, namely the Devadase (who had enjoyed the highest honour in the society) along with Rajdase and Alankaradase. While enjoying an aristocratic life style, the amorous activities appeared to be the primary concern of their life.

As being the true reflector of the society the sculptural description at Madan-Kamdeva though, refused to reflect anything in appropriation of the practical application of the traditional concept of Indian social division i.e the varnasramadharam, but still the sculpture has made an indication about the existence of a class distinction in the society, at the edges of the rich and the poor. Again, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva also visualised a delicate position of women in the Kamrupi society specially the poor one. The sculptural description beautifully described the courses of physical exploitation that those poor women had suffered at the hand of aristocracy. But, on the other hand the position of rich women in the society was comparatively far more better than those of the poor women. They have not only enjoyed the pride of equality with their husband but also have some unique
opportunities when they initiates any form of puja specially the linga puja, to enjoy the taste of ‘sura’ (alcohol) both in habitual or in party (auspicious) occasions. These women have a luxurious life to spend and often remain engaged in ‘prasadhana’ or in other amorous activities for their individual satisfaction. On the other hand the poor women though have enjoyed an open air condition comparing to those rich women, but they had to spend their time in serving those upper class people both physically and mentally as their survival option.

The sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva also supported the cause of a feudal economic set-up in the society where agriculture seem to be the primary occupation of the people. This agricultural economy of the country has got further elaboration with the existence of different professional communities as the sculpture described. The sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva on the other hand suggest on all Indian standard of dress code to the people of Assam. Similarly, while explaining the musical instruments as an alternative amusing item of the people, no such unique innovation are there to observe.

Most interesting revelation of this study is the religious condition of the people of Kamrupa on the light of sculptural exposition. After thorough examination the study reveals that Madan-Kamdeva is a product of the high tide of Tantric esoterism. The refusal of any hatha yogic explanation to the walls of the temple is the best form of alternative used here to express gratitude to the ideal of Tantric esoterism. The depicted magico religious scenes further highlighted the popularity of
Tantrism in Kamrupa. However, the exposition of the antipodal aspects of life in consecrating some of the sculptures like Devi Tritria Tripura, is the most interesting technique used here by the sculptor to explain their obligation to the popular concept of Tantrism. Regarding Saivism, Sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva represent a stage of complete assimilation of the power of Siva and Sakti. Scene representing linga puja along with huge architectural remains with linga pitha explained the prolong dominancy of Saivite culture in this tract of land.

The discovery of large number of Surya icons further increase the possibility of the popularity of saura cult in Kamrupa. However the study nullify the scope for the existence of any Sun temple among the ruins at Madan-Kamdeva and ultimately found that all these discoveries are related, in one ways or other, to the Vastupurusha mandala or the ground plan of temples.

Regarding Buddhism the aesthetic products at Madan-Kamdeva have suggested interesting explanation. Accordingly, though Kamrupa was a celebrated land of Tantric Buddhism, the aesthetic products at Madan-Kamdeva duly explain their occasional subjugation to the concept of puranic Hinduism. Thus refering to the existence of a group of people who had certainly submitted to the ideal of pauranic Buddhism, where Hindu gods and goddesses have duly found their place to the Buddhist form of worship.

Scholar often tried to compare the sculptural product at Madan-Kamdeva with that of Khajoraho of Madhya Pradesh. But, the thorough scrutiny has made it clear that from the
sculptural point of view, Madan-Kamdeva have beared no such comparable similarity with the product of Khajoraho, rather they appeared to be more close to the Orissan style of execution. Similarly, the sculptural product of this centre of our concern also have beared the affiliation (though minor in nature) to some of the great regional schools of Indian art, namely the Rashtrakuta, Chola and Pallavas. Despite of the refusal of M. Dutta, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva have beared some symptomic affiliation to the great Eastern Indian School of medieval art. At best, the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva have an unique stands to the whole paragon of Assamese aesthetics with a pan Indian affiliation, hailed from classicalism to those other great Indian regional aesthetic views, at their exposal.

Thus, the critical study of the sculptures of Madan-Kamdeva flash light on giant realities of the cultural history of Assam. It is a humble expectation that future researches will exposed more fact relating to the history of this site and recorrect our urnest proposition with the arrival of new discoveries.