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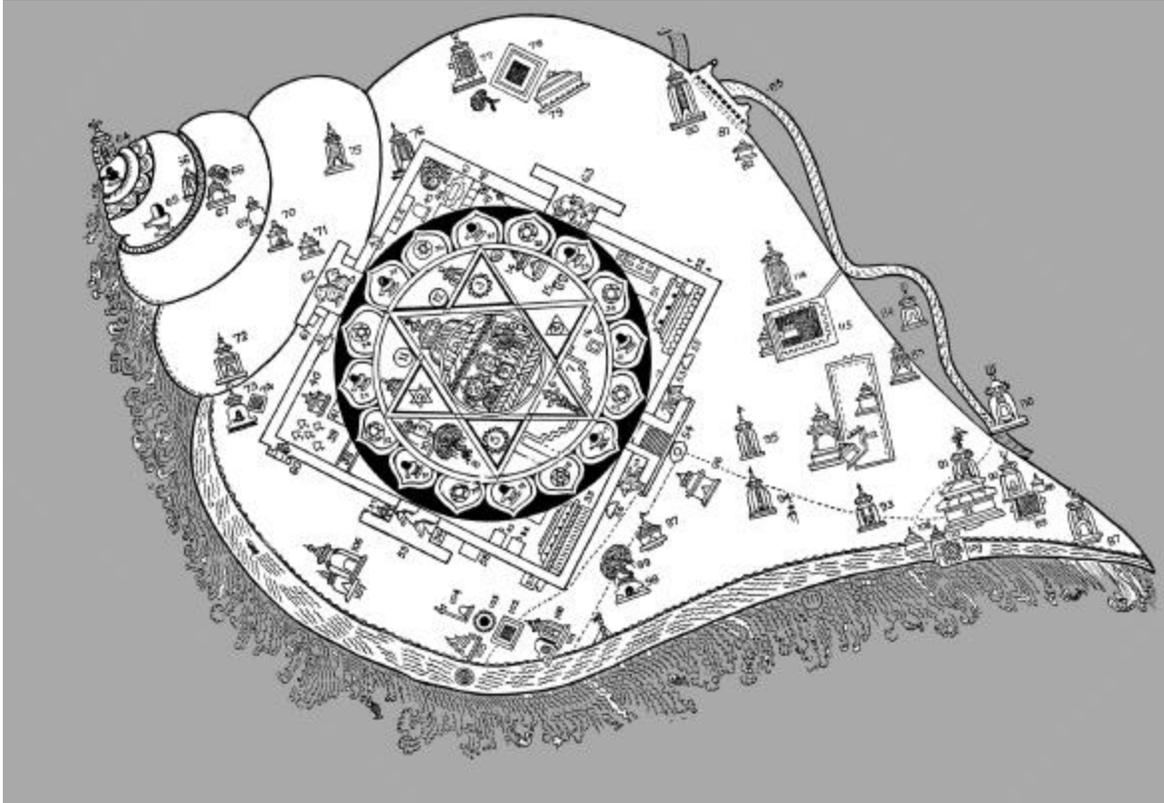
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EDITORIAL



Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and their sister, Subhadra's Ghosa Yatra is a world famous festival. Though it becomes quite difficult to trace the origin of this grand happening, the magnetic force inherent in such rarest human activity attracts devotees from different parts of the world irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Ratha Yatra is the matter of pride and most precious occurrence for all Oriyas. A discerning eye would reveal many hidden aspects of this most enigmatic cult. To protect the institution revolving round the Lord therefore becomes the prime responsibility of the people of Orissa and the Government they have voted for. With this objective in view, the Government of Orissa has already posted a Commissioner rank officer to systematise the administrative functioning of Sri Mandir. Things are being made systematic to facilitate darshan of bhaktas. Internet Technology has paved the way for transmitting the details of Rath Yatra to every nook and corner of India. Orissa Review in its Car Festival issue has gathered many view points concerning the cult of Lord Jagannath. Readers and researchers may find these interesting and useful.

Jai Jagannath.

Ravankar Sekhar Panda



रथारुढे गच्छ न् पथि मिलितभूदेवपट लैः
स्तुतिप्रदादुर्भावं प्रतिपदमुपाकर्ण्य सदयः
दयासिन्धुर्वन्धुः सकलजगतां सिन्धुसुतया
जगन्नाथः स्वामी नयनपथगामी भवतु मे ।

(from Shri Jagannathastakam)

यो द्वेधा प्रकृतिः पुमानिति मतः स्त्रीपुंसदेहाश्रितः
यस्त्रेधा विधिविष्णुशंकरवपुधारी दरीदृश्यते
श्रीमन्नीलगिरो च दारुतनुधृग् योऽसौ चतुर्धास्थितो
राधाकृष्णतनूधरो विजयते वृन्दावने स प्रभुः ।

(from Mukundavilasa)

अस्ति प्रशस्तललितो लवणाब्धितीरे
नीलाचलाञ्जलतटी मुकुटायमानः
एकस्त्रीमूर्तिकुहकाकृत चित्रमूर्ति -
लक्ष्मीपतिः सकलदैवत वन्दनीयः ।

(from Bhakti Bhagavat)

श्रीभूमाधवचक्रचक्रवनीभूद्भद्राभिरभ्युज्वलं
श्रीकण्ठप्रमुखाखिलामरशिखा जुष्टाङ्घ्रिपीठोपलम्
श्रीनीलाचलमौलिमण्डन महानीलायमानं महः
श्रीभूमाधरितस्मरं भवतु नः प्रत्यूहहत्युद्यतम् ।

(from Siddhantadarpana)





Landlord Sri Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije Puri

Dr. Chitrasen Pasayat

During 1997-98, the author was the Tehsildar in-charge of Machhkund Tehsil and subsequently Kotpad Tehsil of Koraput district of Orissa. The author received a letter from the Shri Jagannath Temple Office, Puri to identify the lands of Shri Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije Puri situated in the Tehsil areas. I could not understand how Sri Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije Puri would possess landed properties in Machhkund and Kotpad tehsils which are nearly 650 kms away from Puri. At that time my father-in-law was the District and Session Judge, Puri. In Ratha Yatra-1998, I got the opportunity to visit Puri. I could not meet the then Administrator of the Temple Sri Jayanta Narayan Panda; but I enquired about the matter. Unfortunately, before I could do something I was transferred. What I want to stress here is that many people are ignorant of the vast landed properties of Lord Jagannath located in and outside the state of Orissa. Against this backdrop, present paper attempts to convey some meanings.

The management of Sri Jagannath Temple, Puri has all along been the direct concern of successive rulers during the pre-independent period most probably due to its unique social and religious significance. The preamble to the Sri Jagannath Temple Act 1954 (Orissa Act 11 of 1955) reiterated the fact that the ancient temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri has ever since its

inception been a sacred institution of national importance in which millions of *bhaktas* (devotees) have reposed their faith and belief. They have regarded this living monument as the epitome of Hindu tradition and culture.

It is believed that the assets of Lord Jagannath as recognized during the British Raj, comprised of (i) endowments consisting of assignment of revenue of certain lands by the Marathas (ii) certain *sayer* duties collected on behalf of the Temple and (iii) Pilgrim tax. In the year 1809, the East India Company took over the management of the temple estates. Accordingly, the company also took up the liability to contribute a fixed sum of money to Sri Jagannath Temple, Puri for its maintenance. As important development took place when the pilgrim tax was abolished (Act X of 1840) in the year 1840. Thereafter, in 1843, Government having withdrawn from the management of the endowments, the same were made over to the Raja of Khurda. The estate called *Hazari Mahal* yielding an annual revenue of Rs.17,420/- was also made over to the Raja.

In 1845, the annual money payments to the temple were fixed at Rs.23,321/-. At that time, the cost of maintenance of police force in and around the Temple was Rs.6,804. So, in the year 1856, this amount was deducted and the net



allowance, otherwise known as *Khairat* allowance was fixed at Rs.16,517/-. In 1858, Government decided not to make annual payment but to transfer lands equivalent to Rs.16,517/-. Subsequently in 1859, again the Court of Directors decided that the superintendent i.e. the Raja should also be responsible for preservation of peace inside the Temple and a sum of Rs.6,804/- then paid direct to the police should be paid to the Raja Superintendent Until that period as a transfer of land yielding an equivalent sum could be effected therefore, by the Deeds of 03.04.1858 and 26/30.03.1863 lands yielding a sum of Rs.23,715/- were transferred to Sri Jagannath Temple. This is fully detailed in the following table.

Transfer of Lands yielding an equivalent sum of Rs.23,321/-

(A) Deed of 03-04-1858	
(i) Whole of Zilla Tapang	- Rs. 14,327/-
(ii) Three villages of Zilla Rameswar	- Rs. 2,500/-
	Rs. 16,827/-
(B) Deed of 26/30-03-1863	
(iii) 31 villages of Zilla Rameswar	- Rs. 6,888/-
<hr/>	
GRAND TOTAL	Rs. 23,715/-
<hr/>	
Deduct	
(iv) Average Annual loss due to inundation	- Rs. 104/-
(v) Collection charges	- Rs. 290/-
	Rs. 394/-
<hr/>	
BALANCE	- Rs. 23,321/-
<hr/>	

In view of the above analysis, it may be said that after the British conquest of Orissa in the year 1803, the British Raj, in continuation of the tradition and policy of former rulers, made

annual payments to Sri Jagannath Temple, Puri. For a period, they resumed the endowments then subsisting directly under the Temple to their control and enhanced the annual grants in order to meet the day-to-day requirements for *Sevapuja* of the deities and also to meet the expenditure towards management of the Temple. However, this was severely criticized in England as ailing and abetting idolry in India by a Christian Government. So, the Government in England instructed the Government in India to sever their connections with the management of the Temple and revert back to the earlier system. What we want to point out here is that the then Governments and all previous rulers or Governments had shouldered the responsibility and obligation to make provision for meeting the deficits in the Temple. This tradition continued till the Britishers left and India got independence.

The condition changed after India achieved freedom in 1947. With the implementation of the Orissa Estate Abolition Act 1951, the Trust Estates which were initially exempted from the purview of vesting, ultimately vested in the state on 18.03.1974 in Notification No.13699 of that date. A dominant section of influential people went in writ before the Hon'ble High Court of Orissa, Cuttack challenging the validity of vesting of the Trust Estate of Shri Jagannath Mahaprabhu, Puri. But it was dismissed in the year 1981. Against this, they preferred an appeal in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. Finally, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in their judgement delivered on 02.11.1988 held that the vesting of the Estate by the State Government was in order. It is said that the Shri Jagannath Temple Managing Committee did not contest the case on its own on the instructions of the Government. But the Managing Committee requested the State Government, as the ultimate authority over the affairs of the Temple, to take



appropriate steps for safeguarding the larger interest of Shri Jagannath Mahaprabhu, Puri. It may be noted here that the Managing Committee in a resolution dated 04.01.1988 appealed to the State Government for taking adequate measures and for making special provisions in order to meet the financial requirements of the Temple in view of the special nature and the historical character of the origin of the Estate of Lord Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije Puri.

On 09.04.1988, the Chief Secretary, Government of Orissa took the meeting on the affairs of Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri. It was indicated that the State Government might consider providing a revolving fund of at least Rs.10.00 crore to Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri which would enable the Temple to tide over the financial constraints and would save the state Government from sanctioning financial grants every year for the smooth management of the Temple. Thereafter, another meeting was taken by the Chief Secretary on 10.08.1988 and the matter was discussed further. The result was the formation of a Committee headed by the Finance Secretary to recommend measures for augmentation of financial resources for Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri. Secretary of Law Department, Additional Secretary of Finance

Department and the District Collector of Puri were taken as members of the Committee. Subsequently, Additional Secretary of Revenue and Excise Department was also included as the member of that Committee.

The Committee observed that there had been year to year deficits and the deficits had been made good by assistance from the State Government by way of *ad hoc* compensation against vested estates and grants-in-aid etc. Yet, the Temple was in deficit which increased over the years with rise in the price level. The Committee also discussed some important points as follows; updating of land records by collecting additional information from all districts, filling claims under OEA Act- extension of time, taking over the landed properties by Government on payment of suitable compensation. This exclude the lands necessary for daily *Sevapuja* of the temple, taking over of landed properties where *Marfatdari* rights exist, but the *Marfatdars* have discontinued their service. However, on the basis of the report prepared by the Committee on augmentation of financial resources of Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri the State Government in March, 1991 directed the Temple Administration to furnish full details of properties of Lord Jagannath.

Landed Properties of Lord Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije Puri in the State of Orissa

Sl. No.	District	No. of Tehsils	No. of Villages	Area (in acre)	% to total area of the State
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Khurda	03	456	26,673.493	50.14
2.	Puri	07	787	16,214.848	30.48
3.	Ganjam	12	704	2,843.530	5.34
4.	Bhadrak	05	167	1,330.730	2.50
5.	Kendrapara	07	385	1,267.678	2.38



6.	Sambalpur	01	02	1,133.650	2.13
7.	Cuttack	10	370	1,116.230	2.10
8.	Jajpur	05	154	807.459	1.52
9.	Jagatsinghpur	04	242	671.539	1.26
10.	Baleswar	06	118	523.180	0.98
11.	Nayagarh	04	72	216.960	0.41
12.	Anugul	03	31	116.840	0.22
13.	Mayurbhanj	01	02	57.970	0.11
14.	Dhenkanal	04	26	56.570	0.11
15.	Sundargarh	01	01	45.450	0.09
16.	Bargarh	02	13	41.170	0.08
17.	Koraput	02	04	24.180	0.05
18.	Rayagada	02	06	19.240	0.04
19.	Balangir	01	01	14.190	0.03
20.	Gajapati	01	13	13.459	0.03
21.	Kendujhar	01	05	12.020	0.02
22.	Suvarnapur	01	01	1.000	
23.	Malkangiri	01	01	0.510	
TOTAL		84	3,561	53,201.896	100.02

Landed properties found in various districts as collected from various sources unfold the truth that Khurda (50.14%) and Puri (30.4%) districts together constitute more than eighty percent of total landed properties of Lord Jagannath found in the State. Historically, Bengal to Vijaynagaram is the sacred coastal belt of Jagannath cult. Bhadrak, Baleswar, Ganjam, Cuttack, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur districts belong to this great sacred cultural zone of Orissa. But, landed properties of Lord Jagannath found in these districts are not satisfactory. Perhaps, large scale illegal transfer of lands of Lord Jagannath has been occurred in these parts of the State.

Subsequent identification of lands of Lord Jagannath by comparison of *Sabik* and *Hal* RORs may attest this fact. However, the entire inland region of Orissa contributes less than five percent of the total landed properties of Lord Jagannath by comparison of *Sabik* and *Hal* RORs may attest this fact. However, the entire inland region of Orissa contributes less than five percent of the total landed properties of Lord jagannath, Puri.

Landed properties of lord Jagannath Mahaprabhu *Bije* Puri are also found outside the State of Orissa. A detailed description is given here on the basis of available data collected from various sources.



Landed Properties of Lord Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije Puri Outside the State

Sl. No.	State	Area (in acre)	% to total
1.	West Bengal	322.930	79.47
2.	Maharashtra	28.218	6.94
3.	Madhya Pradesh	26.810	6.60
4.	Andhra Pradesh	16.530	4.07
5.	Tamil Nadu	11.885	2.92
-		406.373	100.00
6.	Uttar Pradesh	Ground floor of a two storied building	

As it has been said earlier, Vijayanagaram to Bengal is the sacred coastal belt of Jagannath cult. But, the contribution of Andhra Pradesh as compared to West Bengal to the landed properties of Lord Jagannath is really minimal. Like Orissa, the landed properties of Lord Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije Puri in Andhra Pradesh and other States might have been illegally transferred and recorded in the names of various individuals, though it is not so easy to ascertain.

There is no denying the fact that Lord Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije Puri is the biggest landlord of the 21st Century. But during the past one hundred years, we the people of Orissa, either as individual or as group have caused tremendous loss to this biggest landlord who is our *Istadevata* and who is the symbol of Oriya nationalism. During Settlement operation, landed properties of Lord Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije Puri have been probably transferred illegally and recorded otherwise. Similar is the case during operation of the consolidation of land-holdings. Further fresh identification of land by comparison of *Sabik* and *Hal* RORs in every Tehsil may throw much lights on the landed properties of Lord Jagannath Bije Puri. Some dedicated and honest workers are required for this rigorous search. If it is done carefully and sincerely then truth may be unearthed.

Dr. Chitrasen Pasayat is the Assistant Administrator of Sri Jagannath Temple Office, Puri, Orissa.





Jamesvara Temple at Puri

Ratnakar Mohapatra

Introduction:-

The temple of Jamesvara is one of the important Saiva shrines of Puri town. This shrine is exactly situated in the Gaudabāda Sāhi, at a distance of half mile to the south west of the Jagannāth temple complex and it is a small temple of little architectural importance.¹ On the basis of the cultural importance of the shrine, R.P.Mohapatra has referred that the place is popularly known as Yamanakatirtha of Orissa.² R.L.Mitra has mentioned that the temple of Jamesvara is said to have been built by Yama, the ruler of the nether regions, but it is poor in appearance and of no interest to the antiquarian.³ This temple is erected in a much deeper ground level. From the architectural points of view, this temple has no such importance but from the cultural points of view, it is one of the important *tirthas* of Orissa. So those devotees who come to visit Lord Jagannātha temple, they also visit the Yamesvara temple.

Kapila Samhitā gives a list of seven sacred spots of Puri town. Out of these, the temple of Yamesvara is one of the important Saiva shrines of the Purusottama Ksetra i.e. Puri town. Pandit Surya Narayan Das has referred that there is no domination of Lord Yama in the Purusottama Ksetra because Yamesvara Mahādeva is protecting the Ksetra from the influence of Yama,

the God of Death.⁴ Prof. H.S. Pattanaik has mentioned that the deity Siva is said to be known as Yamesvara after he triumphed over Yama in course of the latter's bid to foil the meditation of Siva. He had settled here to propitiate Lord Vishnu.⁵

There is a reference in Mahābhārata, which tells that Panca Pāndava (Yudhisthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva) at the time of disguise for one year visited *Yajnavedi* on their way to *Tirtha-yātrā*. They reached this holy place in the evening, stayed one night at this khetra and worshipped Lord Vishnu here for their safe journey.⁶ According to tradition, as a symbol of that *yātrā*, five Mahādeva temples were constructed at Puri town to memorise their stay at this holy place. M.M.Tripathy has also referred that those prominent five Saiva shrines are Lokanātha, Yamesvara, Kapālamocana, Mārkanthesvara and Nilakanthesvara. They are known together as Panca Pāndava or the five brothers.⁷ So the temple of Yamesvara is one of the earliest Saiva shrines of Puri and it is locally called as Yudhistira, the eldest brother among the Panca Pāndava.

As per the description of the *Skanda Purāna*, the geography of Nilācala or Srikhetra is just like a Conch (*Sankha*). It further refers that moved by the utmost devotion of God Siva,



Lord Jagannāth allowed Siva to surround the main temple (i.e. Jagannātha) and divided his shrine into eight folds in different parts of the khetra. They are viz:- Kapālamocana, Kāma, Khetrapāla, Yamesvara, Mārkaṇḍesvara, Viśesvara, Nilakantha and Batesvara temples.⁸ There is another reference regarding the shrine of Yamesvara mentioned in the Skandapurāna. Yamarāja, the God of Death, being instructed by Mahālakṣmi prayed Lord Jagannātha to stay at Srikhetra to worship him. Being satisfied with his prayer Sri Jagannāth allowed him to stay and from that day, he remained at Srikhetra in the name of Yamesvara at a place close to sea-shore. This information has been referred by R.C.Mishra.⁹ M.M. Ganguli has mentioned that names of the temples of Yamesvara, Kapālamocana and Albukesvara are of importance by tradition in respect of their sanctity.¹⁰ R.L.Mitra has mentioned that Yamesvara Mahādeva temple is one of the important shrines among the *Astasambhus* or eight guardian *Sambhus* of the khetra of Lord Jagannātha.¹¹ The other Siva *Sambhus* are Mārkaṇḍesvara, Nilakanthesvara, Vilvesvara, Kapālamocana, Batesvara, Isānesvara and Pātālesvara. Prof. H.S.Pattanaik has described that out of the eight Siva *Sambhus* mentioned by R.L.Mitra and W. Hunter, the five are most important from the cultural point of view. They are namely Lokanātha, Yamesvara, Mārkaṇḍesvara, Nilakathesvara and Kapālamocana.¹² Sri Baidyanatha Gochhikara has stated that shrine of Yamesvara Mahādeva is one of the ancient Saiva *Pithas* of Srikhetra. Other name of this *pitha* was Pānduāshram. Learned scholar Balarama Mishra has also mentioned that the Yamesvara Mahādeva Mandira is one of the famous *astasambhus* of Srikhetra.¹⁴ It is known from various works that the Yamesvara temple is one of the important *Saiva pithas* of Orissa.

The temple of Yamesvara consists of four structures such as the Vimāna, Jagamohana, Nātamandapa and Bhogamandapa. Besides these structures, another additional Mandapa is also constructed in a much later period. The temple is built in both sand stones and laterite stones. It faces to south towards the Sea (Bay of Bengal)

The Vimāna or the main *deula* of Yamesvara temple is of *Pancaratha Rekha* order and its height is about 30 feet from the ground level. The structure of the Vimāna is heavily plastered with lime mortar in the subsequent period of the construction. The base of the bāda is a square of 15 feet on each side. The bādā of the Vimāna is Panchānga type i.e. having fivefold divisions such as Pābhāga, Talajangha, Bandhana, Upara jangha and Bārāṇḍā. Due to the damaged condition of the bādā, it has been recently plastered in cement mortar. The Pābhāga portion of the bada is completely buried under the earth. Dr. B.K.Rath has stated that the temple is 20 feet below the ground level.¹⁶ The Talajangha recesses are filled with the figures of Alasakanyās. The Kānikapaga niches of the both Talajangha and Upara jangha contain Astadikpālas and their female counterparts respectively. They are carved in seated posture on their respective mounts. Recently, most of these Dikpalas are also covered by the cement plaster. The Bandhana of the bada consists of single un-decorated moulding. The bārāṇḍā of the bada is also heavily plastered in cement mortar. Due to the thick plastering in the walls of the bada, the sculptural elements are not visible. The three side central niches of the bada are housed with the Pārsvadevatā images of Ganesha, Kārtikeya and Devi Pārvati.

The gandi of the Vimāna is surmounted by the curvilinear superstructure. The central rāhāpaga of the gandi contains a Jhāpa simha on three sides except front rāhā. The southern or front



side rähäpaga of the Vimäna contains an angasikhara, which is crowned by a gaja-kränta motif. The entire gandi portion of the Vimäna is also heavily plastered with lime mortar. So the decorative ornamentations in its surface are not clearly visible to outside. The Dopichhä lions have been fixed on the top of the Känika pagas. Deula Cärini figures are also inserted in the four cardinal directions of the beki above the rähäpagas. They are acting as the supporting elements of the Amalakasila of the Mastaka.

The Mastaka of the Vimäna consists of beki, amalakasilä, khapuri, kalasa, äyudha (Cakra) and dhvajä.

The sanctum preserves the Saktipitha at its centre and the Siva-Lingam is not visible as it is installed 3 feet below the Saktipitha. The inner back-wall of the sanctum is fixed with a beautiful three-headed image of a deity. According to P.K.Pattanaik, just behind the Lingam, there is a three-headed image of Tryambaka representing the three aspects of Siva; i.e. Creation, Preservation and Destruction.¹⁷ This deity is identified as Dattatreya by scholar Sri Baidyanath Gochhikara, who had also stated that the pedestal of the slab of deity is carved with figures of hamsa, Garuda and bull, which are the conventional mounts of Brahmä, Vishnu and Mahesvara respectively.¹⁸ The image of Harihara is also worshipped in the sanctum. It seems that the shrine of Yamesvara is a coordinating place of all the sects of Hinduism. The shrine of Yamesvara Mahädeva is also an ancient meeting place of Harihara, which is indicated in the rituals of Srimandira. Recently, the inner walls of the sanctum are fully covered with china plates.

The Jagamohana of the Yamesvara temple is a Pidhä deula and its height is about 22 feet from the ground level of the temple complex. The base of the bada is square in size and it measures

approximately 18 feet in each side. The bada is made of fivefold divisions such as päbhäga, tala jangha, bandhana, upara jangha and bärandä. The Päbhäga portion is completely buried under the earth. The talajangha is decorated with pidhä mundis. The intervening recesses between the pagas of talajangha are decorated with simha vidalas and gajavidalas. The bandhana of the bada consists of three decorated horizontal mouldings. The upara jangha of the bada is also decorated with the pidhä mundis. The intervening recesses of the upara jangha are filled with erotic scenes, amorous couples, alaskanyäs with different postures, sälabhanjikä figures and female figures carrying babies on their waists etc. Most of the decorative elements of the bada are covered with plaster. The central niches of both eastern and western bada walls of the Jagamohana are fixed with balustrade windows. The lintel of the balustrade window is capped by a projecting eave on each side (wall). The gaväksa mandanas are completely undecorated in both sides. The bärandä of the bada is devoid of decorative ornamentation.

The pyramidal superstructure is surmounted on the gandi of the jagamohana. It consists of two potälas; the lower and the upara potälas, which contain three and two pidhäs respectively. Tänkäs are fixed in all sides of the pidhäs. Both the deula cärini and dopichhä lions are completely absent in their respective places.

The mastaka of the Jagamohana consists of beki, ghantä (bell shaped member) above which there is another beki, alamala, Kasitä, Khapuri, Kalasha, äyudha (trident) and dhvajä.

Lime wash has been applied to the entire gandi and mastaka of the Jagamohana.

Nätamandapa

The Nätamandapa of the Yamesvara temple is a pidhä deula and its height is about 20



feet from the ground level of the temple complex. This structure is erected on a low platform of one foot height. It seems that the nātamandapa was constructed in a later period than that of the main shrine and Jagamohana. The base of the bada is rectangular and it measures approximately 25 feet in length and 20 feet in width respectively. The bada of the nātamandapa is panchānga type i.e. having fivefold divisions such as pābhāga, talajangha, bandhana, uparajangha, and bārandā. All the elements of the bada are completely plain. The gandi of the nātamandapa is surmounted by the pyramidal roof. It consists of three flat shaped pidhās. There is no element of the mastaka found from the top of the upara pidhā.

Two bulls are kept on a circular pedestal, at the centre of the nātamandapa. In the close vicinity of the pillar is seen an image of Garuda carved in the conventional pose.

Bhogamandapa

The bhogamandapa of the Yamesvara temple is a pidhā deula of about 20 feet in height. This structure is also erected on a platform of one foot height. The base of the bada is rectangular which measures 35 feet in length and 28 feet in width. The bada is also panchānga type i.e. having fivefold divisions, which are devoid of decorative ornamentations. The gandi of the nātamandapa is surmounted by the pyramidal superstructure. It consists of three flat-shaped pidhā mouldings. The recesses or kånthis between the pidhās are filled with small dopichhā lions at the corners and dancing female figures with musical instruments on the other parts of it respectively.

Most of the component parts of the mastaka are not found from the top of the upara pidhā. There is only one kalasa inserted on the top of the mastaka. Two jhāpa simhas have been projected on the eastern and western sides of the kalasa respectively.

Additional Mandapa

Besides the above four structures, there is an additional Mandapa erected in front of the bhogamandapa hall. It is probably built in a much later period. The structure is built on a plinth of two feet height. The base of the bada is a square of 25 feet on each side. The bada of the mandapa consists of fivefold divisions such as pābhāga, tala jangha, bandhana, upara jangha and bārandā. All the component parts of the bada are completely plain. The pyramidal structure is surmounted on the gandi of the additional mandapa. It consists of three flat-shaped pidhās. Dopichhā lions are fixed on the top of the kånika pagas. The figures of deula Cārinis have also been inserted in the four cardinal directions of the beki above the rāhās. The mastaka of the additional mandapa has the usual elements of Orissan pidhā deula.

Portal Decoration

The sanctum has one doorway towards the jagamohana. The facets of the doorjambes are embellished with scroll works, nāgabandhas, creepers containing frolicking dwarfs and floral devices. The centre of the door lintel is carved with an image of Gaja-Lakshmi seated in Lalita pose displaying lotus and varada mudrā in hands. Figures of Gangā and Yamunā are carved along with dvārapālas at the base of the doorjambes. Images of Siva and Pārvati have been installed on both side walls of the sanctum. The jagamohana has one doorway towards the nātamandapa. The doorjambes of the jagamohana are devoid of the decorative ornamentations. Figures of Nandi and Bhringi, the conventional doorkeepers of Lord Siva are depicted at the base of the door jambes. The door frames of the both nātamandapa and bhogamandapa are completely plain. The additional natamandapa has plain open doorways in all sides.



Sculptures

The central rāhāpaga niches of the bada of the Vimāna are housed with the pārsvadevatā images of Ganesha, Kārtikeya and Pārvati in three sides. According to an old priest, the original pārsvadevatā images of Ganesha and Kārtikeya were severely damaged, which have been replaced by new images in 1980's. Ganesha is housed as the pārsvadevatā of the southern side. This four-handed Ganesha image has been installed on the double petalled lotus pedestal. His four hands display rosary, a broken tusk, parasu or hatchet and a pot containing laddus. No figure of mouse is carved on the pedestal of the deity. The front side of the Ganesha image is covered with a small nishā-shrine of pidhā order and its height is about 15 feet from the ground level of the temple complex.

The image of Kārtikeya is housed as the Pārsvadevatā of the back or northern side wall of the Vimāna. The four-handed image of Kārtikeya has been installed on the double petalled lotus pedestal. He holds a trident in his right upper hand, rooster cock in left upper hand, touching the mouth of peacock in the right lower hand and the left lower hand displays abhaya mudrā. Two female sakhi figures are carved in standing posture on both sides of the deity. The back side of the head of the deity is decorated with trefoil makara arch crowned by the kirtimukha motif. Two flying apsarā figures are carved on both top corners of the slab.

Devi Pārvati is housed as the Pārsvadevatā of the eastern side central niche of the bada. The four-handed devi Pārvati has also been installed on the double petalled lotus pedestal. She holds a snake in right upper hand, rosary in right lower hand, a spear in left upper hand and a lotus flower in left lower hand respectively. Two female figures are carved on both side slab of the deity. The

back side of the head of the deity is finely decorated with trefoil makara arch. Two flying asparā figures holding garland of flowers in their hands depicted on the both side top corners of the slab. The front side of the goddess Pārvati is also covered by a nishā-shrine of the pidhā-order. This shrine has also a small jagamohana of pidhā order. Lion, the conventional mount of Devi Pārvati has been installed in the floor of that jagamohana (in front of the nishā-shrine).

The masonry pedestals close to the inner walls of the jagamohana are fixed with images of Hari-Hara, Aja, Hara-Pārvati, Surya, Gaja-Lakhmi, Rāma-Laxmana, Yama, Gangā, Yamunā, Pārvati, Trivikrama and Varāha-Vishnu.

The southern side inner wall niche of the jagamohana contains a composite image of Hari-Hara, which is made of brass. His four hands display trident in right upper hand, dambaru in right lower hand, conch in left upper hand and cakra in left lower hand respectively. In the jagamohana, there is an image of one legged Aja, one of Siva's many forms. P.K.Pattanaik has referred that an interesting features found in the jagamohana is the one legged statue of Aja, which probably goes to suggest the commemoration of a sacrifice at that spot.¹⁹

The North West corner of the inner wall of the jagamohana is occupied by a small stone slab, which contains a composite image of Hara-Pārvati. They are carved in seated posture with usual attributes in their hands. The entire slab of this composite deity is closely tied with the serpent hoods (seven hooded).

Another separate stone slab in the jagamohana hall contains an image of Sun God who is installed on a pedestal decorated with seven horses. He holds full blown lotus flowers in his two hands. The backside of the head of the deity is decorated with trefoil arch crowned by



the kirtimukha motif. Apsarā figures are finely carved on both sides of the top corners of the slab.

The image of Rāma is installed in seated posture on the single petalled lotus pedestal. His right hand rests on his knee and the left hand holds a bow, which is now damaged. He carries arrows on his backside. This separate stone image of Rāmachandra is carved in traditional archer style and is kept in the Jagamohana hall.

There is a separate slab which contains the image of Laxmana who is installed in bending posture on the plain pedestal. His two hands are engaged in straightening the arrow with a bow. The backside of the head of the deity is decorated with trefoil arch. In the Jagamohana, there is an image of Yama, the god of death. He holds the usual elements in his hands. Pandit Krushna Chandra Acharya has stated that the statue of Yama is symbolic of the legendary triumph of Siva over Yama here.²⁰

The four-handed image of Varāha in the attitude of lifting Bhudevi is fixed to a niche of the inner wall of the jagamohana. He holds sankha, cakra, gadā and padma in his four hands.

The niches of the inner walls of the nātamandapa are housed with the sculptures of Trivikrama, Ganesha, Pārvati and Varāha-Vishnu. The image of Trivikrama displays sankha, cakra, gada and padma in his four hands. The Ganesha image is with trunk turned to the left. He holds broken tusk, rosary, pot containing sweet balls (laddus) and goad in his four hands. The Pārvati image is carved in standing posture on the lotus pedestal. Lion, the conventional mount of Devi is carved on the right side of the pedestal. She holds snake, rosary, spear and lotus as usual attributes in hands. The four-armed Varāha-Vishnu image is fixed to a niche of the inner wall. He displays the usual elements in his four hands.

In a corner of the bhogamandapa is kept an image of Hari-Hara representing iconographic features of the two prominent cults of the Hindu pantheon. This composite figure is in seated posture on the pedestal, which contains the figures of both Bull and Garuda, the conventional mounts of Siva and Vishnu respectively. The four hands of this composite deity displays trident in right upper hand, dambaru in right lower hand, conch in left upper hand and cakra in left lower hand respectively. The backside of the head of this composite deity is decorated with trefoil makara arch crowned by the kirtimukha motif. On the basis of the sculptural features, learned scholar R.P. Mohapatra has mentioned that the cult icons noted above are of varying dates and workmanship.²¹

Two relief works in cement mortar representing Anantasāyi Vishnu and Bastraharana scenes are noticed higher up on the inner northern wall of the nātamandapa. The relief depicting Anantasāyi Vishnu is attended by a host of divinities like Lakshmi, Siva, Brahmā and Nārada etc. Similarly the Bastraharana scene represents Krishna playing his favourite flute on a kadamba tree and Gopis in the midst of the Yamunā River in folded hands asking to return their garments. This relief is very attractive from the artistic points of view.

The western inner wall of the bhogamandapa is decorated with some relief works in cement mortar. They are such as Trinity deities of Jagannātha, Balabhadra and Subhadra, worship of Siva Linga by Rāma and Laxmana, figure of Garuda, images of Kāli, Vishnu and Mahāvira etc.

Due to the heavy plastering done in the later period, the original architectural features, sculptural decorations and scroll works of the main deula and the Jagamohana are not in a position for accurate study.



Paintings

The western inner wall of the bhogamandapa is depicted with a painting of Bänāmbara (Siva). The ten-handed figure of Bänāmbara is in standing posture on the prostrate body of an asura. His right five hands display parasu, päsa-änkusa, trident, dambaru and in varada mudrä while the left five hands hold snake, kapäla, gadä, bell and in abhaya mudrä respectively. According to R.P. Mohapatra this figure (Bänāmbara) is executed in the traditional patä style paintings of Orissa.²²

Boundary Wall

The temple of Yamesvara is enclosed by a compound wall of 25 feet in height from the ground. It is made of laterite stones and measures approximately 105 feet of square in each side. The temple complex has two gateway entrances; one on the southern and another on the eastern side of the compound wall respectively. One has to descend a flight of steps provided for entry into the courtyard and the dancing hall (nätamandapa) as well as the bhogamandapa of the temple.

A couple of steps below is the vestibule which is a relatively later addition, like the bhogamandapa and the nätamandapa.²³ There exist further flight of steps to come to the garbhagriha. The various stages in the structural development of the temple as also the antiquity of its oldest portions are clearly discernible in the various levels of the temple.²⁴

The surface of the temple complex is about 22 feet below the road level. Learned scholar P.K.Pattanaik has mentioned that the shrine of Yamesvara is erected 45 feet below the ground level.²⁵ Two lions are projected in both sides of each gateway of the temple complex. They are acting as the traditional gate keepers of the temple.

There is a big Mahävira image in the middle of the descending steps of the southern side entrance gateway of the temple.

Date of the Temple

There is no authentic evidence or record regarding the approximate date of construction of the Yamesvara temple of Puri. Most of the scholars accept that the old Saiva shrines of Puri were constructed during the Somavamsi period of Orissa history i.e. in 10th-12th century A.D. According to the opinions of the old priests, this Siva temple was built in the eleventh century AD. On the basis of the architectural features, P.K. Pattanaik has mentioned that the temple of Yamesvara probably belongs to the eighth century AD.²⁶ Dr. B.K. Rath has mentioned that the Jambesvara temple of Puri was constructed in the twelfth century AD.²⁷ Dr. D.R.Das has stated that the temple of Yamesvara represents an incipient Pancaratha plan. Among the better known Pancaratha temple of Orissa, the Muktesvara temple is the earliest example in which the Pancharatha plan is firmly established.²⁸ Therefore, it is logical to trace the ancestry of the Pancharatha plan of Muktesvara temple to the style of this temple. There is some resemblance between these two. Their architectural style prompts one to find in Yamesvara temple an anticipation of the plan of Muktesvara temple, which belongs to the second half of the 10th century AD. This point has been highlighted by Dr. K.C. Panigrahi.²⁹ He indicates that the temple of Yamesvara was constructed in a later period than the Muktesvara temple of Bhubaneswar. Learned historian J.B.Padhi has mentioned that the temples of Yamesvara and Märkandesvara must have belonged to the Somavamsi period considering their architectural style.³⁰ Prof. H.S. Pattanaik has also mentioned that the temple of Yamesvara belongs to the Somavamsi rule of Orissan history.³¹ Prof. H.V. Stietencron has



pointed out that the original presiding deity of the kshetra was Vimalā and her shrine (temple) was situated at Nilācala. Flanking this dune in the west and the north were the Saiva temples of Yamesvara, Kapāla Mocana, Lokanātha and Märkandevvara, several of which are now mostly below the present ground level.³² This information suggests that the temple of Yamesvara is contemporary to the old Vimalā temple, which was constructed during the Somavamsi period. On the basis of the architectural style, the construction period of the main deula and the porch of the Yamesvara temple can be tentatively assigned to the first half of the 11th century AD. It was also contemporary of the Kapālamocana Siva temple of the town and probably built before the present Jagannātha temple of Puri.

Rituals & Festivals

The temple of Yamesvara is connected with some rituals of Lord Jagannātha temple of Puri. Pandit Surya Narayana Das has referred that all the Panca dvārapāla Mahādevas (i.e. Lokanātha, Märkandesvara, Yamesvara, Kapāla Mocana and Nilakanthesvara) actively participate in the Candan yātrā of god Madana Mohana.³³ So Yamesvara like other Mahādevas of the kshetra participates in this Candan Yātrā festival. The deity Sudarsana from the Jagannātha temple also visits Lord Yamesvara on the day of Radhāstami. Special rites are performed in the Yamesvara temple in consonance with the rites in the Jagannātha temple on four occasions namely Rādhāstami, Campakadvādasi, Srāvana Purnimā and Asvina Purnimā.³⁴ This temple is also connected with Sägarbije, Āshram bije and Sitalasasthi rituals of the Jagannātha temple. Car festival is observed here on the eve of Sitalasasthi (day following marriage of Siva and Pārvati). Learned scholar R.C.Mishra has mentioned that there are some similarities between rituals of Lingarāja temple of Bhubaneswar with the

Yamesvara temple of Puri. Here Tulasi leaves as well as Bela leaves are used for Pujā as in the Lingarāja temple. Anna prasāda is also offered here like that temple.³⁵ Besides these, the festival of Yama Dwitiyā in the 2nd day bright fortnight of the month of Kārtika (October) is observed in this temple with great enthusiasm.

This temple is managed by the Endowment Commission of Government of Orissa.

Thus, it is known from the above discussion that the Yamesvara temple is one of the important Saiva shrines of Puri. Although, the architectural features of the temple is not so importance but from the cultural point of view, it is equal to the Märkandesvara and Kapāla Mocana Siva temples of Puri. Most of the scholars and traditional accounts suggest that the shrine is an important tirtha of Orissa. The architectural style of the temple indicates that it was constructed during the same period of the Kapāla Mocana temple of Puri and was probably constructed after the Muktesvara temple in the first half of the 11th century AD. The available sculptures in the temple premises indicate that they were made in the different periods Government of Orissa (from Somavamsi to the modern period). This temple is also closely connected with some rituals of Lord Jagannātha and Lingarāja temples of Puri and Bhubaneswar. Among the old Siva temples of Puri town, Yamesvara temple is one of the important shrines, which is considered next to the Lokanātha temple of Puri in importance as a Saiva shrine.

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Vedic Background of Jagannath Cult

Dr. Bidyut Lata Ray

Prelegomenon:

The origin of Jagannath Cult has been traced back to the time of the *Veda*. The images of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra of the Jagannatha Temple at Puri are made of *Daru* (Neem Wood) which is specially chosen with its symbols and characteristics. Therefore, Lord Jagannatha is called "*Daru-Devata*", the deity made of wood. In the *Rgveda*, we find the mention of *Daru* floating in the ocean. Prayers are chanted here for taking shelter in the *Daru*.



The deities of Jagannatha temple of Puri are worshipped with *Gayatri Mantra* which has its Vedic origin. Lord Jagannath is worshipped according to *Dasaksari* (ten syllabled) and *Astadasaksari* (eighteen syllabled) *mantras*. Balabhadra is worshipped as Vasudeva (the son of Vasudeva) with the twelve-syllabic *Vasudeva Mantra*. He is worshipped with the hymns of *Purusa Sukta* since he is treated as *Virata*. In the worship of goddess Subhadra, *Sri* and *Devi Suktas* of the *Veda* are used. Subhadra is

worshipped with monosyllabic, (*Ekaksara*) Mantra "*Hrim*".

Every year the Car Festival of Lord Jagannath is held at Puri and other places in India and abroad. The origin of the *Ratha* (Chariot) has been traced back to the Vedas. The *Rgveda* mentions the three storied *Rathas* drawn by horses. These *Rathas*, according to *Rgveda* were moving in the air. As described in the *Atharvaveda*, the divinities were chariots.

The observance of the Car Festival of Lord Jagannath dates back to the period of the *Puranas*. Vivid descriptions of this festival are found in *Brahma Purana*, *Padma Purana* and *Skanda Purana*. *Kapila Samhita* also refers to *Ratha Yatra*. According to *Satapatha Brahmana*, *Ratha* has been originated from one of the broken part of the weapon flung by Indra on the body of the demon *Brtrasura* during the fight between the two.

From the above considerations, it seems that there exist so many links between *Veda* and



the Jagannath Cult. In the present paper, it is aimed to investigate the speciality of the stones and metals used in the construction of the temple of Lord Jagannatha at Puri and in the worship of the deities there.

Vedic Stones and Other Building Materials:-

Out of the four *Vedas*, *Rg*, *Yaju*, *Sama* and *Atharva*, most of the *Suktas* of the *Rgveda* are connected with religious discourses. The essential feature of the *Yajurveda* is relevant to the performance of sacrifices. The *Samaveda* is the foundation for Indian music. The *Atharvaveda* is noted to be the foundation of the science of Indian medicine. It is also observed that this *Veda* is the source of the Science of Indian Archery (*Dhanurveda*). The Vedic hymns contain in them the subject matter of various disciplines of human knowledge; namely religion, art, music, culture, geology, physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, sociology, poetics, agriculture, astronomy, astrology, cosmology, mathematics, literature, language, environment and others; all blended in one. Here we are concerned only with the geological aspects of the *Rgveda* since we are to identify here the stones and metals mentioned in the *Vedas*. Moreover, there was spectacular advancement in the study of metallurgy during the Vedic period. Later on, this led to the geological foundation of our Hindu religion.

The *Yajurveda* refers to some inorganic materials like rocks, soil, mountains, hills, sands etc. The rocks take variety of shapes undergoing through severe geological phenomena in nature. For example, the Hindus worship the *lingas* which are nothing but forms that have been a result of prolonged differential weathering of the ground or rocks. These rock-pieces, however, hold the religious ethos and receive considerable appreciation. In the ancient times, the rocks were

the chief building materials of the temples of the Hindus and shrines of the Jainas and Buddhists. Different types of stones have been used in the construction of various temples of our country. The famous Jagannatha temple at Puri is made out of a type of rock called khondolites. The famous Hoysala temples of Karnataka are carved out of steatite; those of Badami are of sandstone; many of the South Indian temples are made of granites, charnockites and similar rocks. The temples of Maharashtra are made of basalt. The famous Ajanta and Ellora cave temples are made of basalt rocks which are highly jointed and can break into angular pieces when even hammer weight is applied. Most of the temples in Gujarat and Rajasthan are made of marble. According to their acoustic property, these rocks have been classified as male, female and hermaphrodite. The rocks which produce bronze sound on the application of hammer weight are called male, those producing a brass sound as female both these as hermaphrodite. In *Silpasastra*, the male rocks should be used for carving male deities, the female rocks for female deities and the hermaphrodite rocks for making the base and other parts. This attitude of giving religious colour to a geological truth is rooted in the Vedic times.

Vedic metals in the worship of Jagannatha - Triad:

The *Yajurveda* mentions the metals like gold, silver, iron, lead, tin, copper and steel for the performance of sacrifices. Out of these metals, gold and silver are chosen for making ornaments; and the utensils of the deities are specially made of brass, silver, copper and gold. Bronze and Brass alloys have not been mentioned in the *Yajurveda*; probably they are later to the Yajurvedic period. The *Niladri Mahodayam* hints at the ornamental value of the gold.



Vedic soils in Jagannath Temple

The use of earthen pots were there in the ancient times. White, red and black soils have been mentioned in the *Grhyasutras*. The *Niladri Mahodayam* mentions that the red coloured pots are used in the temple of Lord Jagannath for cooking of food, whereas the black coloured pots are not fit for the kitchen. The cracked-pots and the pots having holes were unfit for use.

To sum up, it can be said that Jagannathism totally rests on Vedism in respect of geological components and so many other attributes. Vedic thoughts and pantheons have been reflected here in the Jagannath Cult. The elements of *Daru*-worship, *Ratha Yatra*, mode of worship employing *Gayatri-mantra*, temple architecture with vedic stones, use of utensils made of metals mentioned in the *Vedas* and cooking of food for the deities of Srimandira in the specially designed pots made out of red soil referred in the Vedic hymns, etc. provide evidences of Vedic view of Jagannathism. Further investigations, no doubt, can reveal many more facts regarding Vedic background of the Jagannath Cult.

References:

1. *Rgveda*, X, 155.3M "Ado Yaddaru", *Atharvaveda, Paipalada Samhita*, Lahore, Vol.8.7, 3M "Ado Yaddaru".
2. *Rgveda*, III, 62.10.

Also, cf. B.L. Ray's *Jagannatha Cult*, Kant Publications, Delhi, 1998, PP.101, 177, 210, 211, 217, 218, 227 and 254.

3. Ray, B.L., *Studies in Jagannatha Cult*, Classical Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1993, P.59.
4. Mishra, K.C., *The Cult of Jagannath*, Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta, 1971, P.151.
5. Ray, B.L., *Studies in Jagannatha Cult*, P.60.
6. *Ibid*.
7. *Ibid*, PP.115-116.
8. *Ibid*, IX, 62.17.
9. *Ibid*, V.41.6.
10. *Atharvaveda*, XX, 2.14.
11. *Brahma Purana*, ch.66.
Padma Purana, Patala Khanda, Chs.16-26.
Skanda Purana, Utkala Khanda, Chs.33-35.
12. *Kapila Samhita*, 19, PP.99-102.
13. *Satapatha Brahmana*, IV,2.
14. *Yajurveda*, IV,5.
15. Murthy, S.R.N., *Vedic View of the Earth*, D.K. Print World Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1997, P.39.
16. *Ibid*, P.40.
17. *Yajurveda*, IV, 5.
18. *Niladri Mahodayam*, 28.14 b.
19. *Gobhila Grhyasutra*, IV, 7.5-7.
20. *Niladri Mahodayam*, 10.101.
21. *Ibid*, 11.48.

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Orissan Vaisnavism Under Jagannath Cult

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Vaisnavic customs of Orissa are meticulously discussed in the *Dharmasastra-Nibandhas* of Orissa from which a special characteristic of Orissan Vaisnavism is determined. In the *Dharmasastra - Nibandhas* like "*Nityacharapradipa*" of Narasingha Vajapeyi (c.1525-1580A.D.), "*Kalasara*" of Gadadhara Rajaguru (c.1700-1750A.D) and "*Kalasarvasva*" of Krishna Mishra (c.1750-1850 A.D) this has been recorded with full evidence and history. An humble attempt is made in this article to evaluate the degree of influence of *Dharmasastras* upon the Vaisnavic customs of Orissa concentrating on those three works.

Both the followers of *Smarta*-tradition and Vaisnavic tradition are advised to observe the *Chaturmasyavrata* without fail. But regarding the beginning day of this *Vrata* for Vaisnavas, the tradition differs from that of the tradition of the *Smartas*. We find three categories of this tradition in Orissa. In one category the *Chaturmasyavrata* begins from the fullmoon day of *Asadha* (June-July). In the second category, the same *Vrata* begins from the eleventh day of bright fortnight of *Asadha*. In the third category, the beginning day of *Chaturmasyavrata* has been considered to be the *Karkata-Samkranti*. From these three categories, the followers of *Smarta* tradition resort to the first category whereas the

followers of Vaisnavic tradition have shown their inclination to abide by the other two categories.

In this context, Gadadhara Rajaguru in *Kalasara* (1971.Cuttack.P.25) tries to connect *Kartikavrata* with the *Chaturmasyavrata*. He cites a lot of textual evidences in support of the above said three categories. Quoting the text of *Mahabharat* he opines that the *Chaturmasyavrata* is to be started in the very eleventh day of bright fortnight of *Asadha* i.e. *Asadha Suklapakhya Ekadasi*. Depending upon the text of *Varaha Purana*, he says in support of other two categories. Taking recourse to the view of *Skanda Purana*, he is of the opinion that a person, who is not capable of observing the full course of *Chaturmasyavrata*, takes the month of *Kartika* as the alternative. However, with this kind of categorization, the problem is not solved. Although the beginning day of *Chaturmasya* differs according to different categories of tradition, still in Orissa, we find some sort of significant tradition in Vaisnavic lore. In Orissa we find two categories of *Vaisnavas* who worship Krishna as their god. In one category, the *Vaisnavas*, who accept Chaitanya as Krishna, are regarded as *Gouda-Vaisnavas* (Bengali *Vaisnavas*). In the second category, the *Vaisnavas* who adore Lord Jagannath as Krishna are regarded as the *Uddra-Vaisnavas* (Orissan *Vaisnavas*). For the *Gouda-Vaisnavas* of Orissa,



the *Chaturmasyavrata* is to be started with effect from the eleventh day of bright-fortnight of *Asadha* and concluded on the same day of the month of *Kartika*. In the same way the *Kartikavrata* is to be started from the eleventh day of bright-fortnight of *Asvina* and concluded on the same day of *Kartika* by them.

For the Orissan *Vaisnavas*, the *Chaturmasyavrata* is to be started with effect from the fullmoon day of *Asadha* and concluded on the fullmoon day of *Kartika*. Here both *Ekadasi* and *Purnima* are marked to be the two factors for making difference between the traditions of *Gouda-Vaisnavas* and *Uddra-Vaisnavas*. In this connection, Gadadhara Rajaguru is of the view that if *Chaturmasyavrata* or *Kartikavrata* is to be concluded on *Kartika-Shukla-Ekadasi*, the person who undergoes this *Vrata* has to observe *Parana* (taking usual food after fasting) on the very day of *Ekadasi*. But the *Vaisnavas*, to whichever seat they may belong, have to strictly observe fasting on the very day of *Ekadasi*. Therefore, in no way the *Vaisnavas* are advised to conclude *Chaturmasya-vrata* or *Kartikavrata* on the very eleventh day of bright-fortnight of *Kartika* with this sort of argument and analysis of the texts or *Sastras*. Gadadhara Rajaguru opines that the *Vaisnavas* have to extend their *Chaturmasyavrata* or *Kartikavrata* up to the fullmoon day of *Kartika* in spite of the fact that they start it on different days. This is very much customary in the Temple of Jagannath.

We find a number of references in support of observance of *Chaturmasyavrata* at Puri and Bhubaneswar. The *Sastrakaras* advise that the *Smartas*, *Vaisnavas*, *Saivas* or whoever they may be, should take the vow to remain at Puri or Bhubaneswar during *Chaturmasya* (*Sravana-Bhadra*, *Asvina* and *Kartika*). The persons

who chose to reside at Puri, have to start this *Vrata* with effect from the eleventh day of bright-fortnight of *Asadha* and conclude on the fullmoon day of *Kartika*. But for the persons who chose to remain at Bhubaneswar, the beginning date of *Chaturmasya* or *Kartikavrata* as the *Ekadasi* is not mandatory since it is a pilgrim center of the *Saivites: Saiva-kshetra*.

It is observed that for the Orissan *Vaisnavas*, the beginning day of *Chaturmasya vrata* or *Kartikavrata* may differ, but the concluding day must be the fullmoon day of *Kartika* i.e. *Kartika Purnima*. This is being practiced in the Jagannath Temple at Puri signifying the influence of *Smarta*-tradition upon Orissan *Vaisnavism* under Jagannath Cult.

In Puranic *Smarta* tradition, the *Vaisnavas* of Orissa are advised not to take the *Naivedya* of deities who are different from their *Istadevata*. This has been corroborated by citation from Krishna Mishra by the text of *Skanda Purana*, quoted in *Kalasarvasva* (Puri, 1997.P.379). We find some sort of liberal in this tradition of Orissan *Vaisnavism*. In this connection, Narasingha Vajapeyi and Krishna Mishra express their views differently. From the views of Narasingha Vajapeyi it is understood that the *Naivedya* offered to any deity can be accepted, if it is offered according to the prescribed rules of any sect. But Krishna Mishra in *Kalasarvasva* (p.380) refutes this view of Narasingha Vajapeyi. He is of the opinion that this kind of *Naivedya* is prohibited for the *Vaisnavas* even though it is offered to any deity according to the prescribed rules of *Vaisnavic Sastras*.

Apart from this view of Vajapeyi, attention of scholars may be drawn towards his second view. According to him, if a *Vaisnava*, in the daily worship of his *Istadevata*, offers *Naivedya* and takes it subsequently, thus demerit (*pratyavaya*)



of some sort in worship is created under the notion that anything dedicated to the deity is not to be taken back. But Krishna Mishra in *Kalasarvasva* (p.380) opines that the merit created in taking *Visnu-naivedya* after offering is greater than that of the demerit created by taking *Visnu-naivedya* in daily worship.

It is observed that although these two views differ from one another, still in practice these two views are followed under certain conditional option (*vyavasthita-vikalpa*). Any *Vaisnava* householder belonging to any sect, does not take the *Naivedya* of the *Istadevata* of his own which is offered in daily worship. But the *Vaisnava-Sanyasini* and *Vairagis* are in favour of taking *Naivedya* even though it is offered in honour of own *Istadevata* i.e. Jagannath-Vishnu. This is maintained with the influence of *Dharmasastras* upon the *Vaisnavism* of Orissa under Jagannath Cult.

It is an accepted tradition all over India that *Naivedyas* of Siva is not to be taken even by the *Saivites*. But we find an exception in case of *Naivedyas* offered in honour of Lord Lingaraj at Bhubaneswar as recorded in *Kalasarvasva* of Krishna Mishra. According to him the *Naivedyas* offered to Lord Lingaraj is considered to be the *Siva-naivedya*. The *Vaisnavas* are inclined to consider it as *Visnu-naivedya*. Here Lingaraja, although a Siva, is treated as a devotee of Lord Visnu. Since *Vaisnavas* or devotees of Visnu take the *Naivedyas* dedicated to Visnu, therefore, Lingaraja, being the devotee of Vishnu, is supposed to take *Visnu-naivedya* as a matter of fact. That is why anything offered to Lord Lingaraja, at first, is dedicated to Lord Visnu (i.e. Jagannath) and subsequently that is offered to Lingaraja. This conception in respect of acceptability of *Naivedya* gives encouragement to the *Vaisnavas* of Orissa to be liberal. On the basis of this, the *Smarta-Vaisnavas* show their

inclination to take Lingaraja (Siva) as Visnu and his *naivedya* as *Visnu-naivedya*. This peculiarity in Orissan *Vaisnavism* has been corroborated by Krishna Mishra with the help of *Ekamra Purana* quoted in *Kalasarvasva* (p.381)

It is an accepted custom in *Vaisnavic* life in general that the *Vaisnavas* decorate their body with the signs of *Visnu-ayudha* i.e. mace, disc etc. and in order to remind the life of Krishna-Visnu to the public for the reason that they can recall the very theme of Krishna's life as well as the name of Krishna. It is noteworthy that *Visnu smarana* is one of the atonements of sins.

As the sacred thread is used daily, similarly the signs of mace, disc etc. are decorated on the body. This sort of work has been included in the list of *Vaisnavic nityakarma*. But attaining nature call one has to wash off those signs decorated on the body and new signs of those *ayudhas* are to be drawn once again. We are told by the *Dharmasastra-nibandhakaras* that the old signs of the *Visnu-ayudha* are to be washed off and new signs along with *tulasimala* are to be taken before *sandhya-bandana* i.e. evening worship. Therefore, the *Vaisnavas* of Orissa decorate their bodies with the help of *gopi-chandana* twice daily. Narasingha Vajapeyi records this tradition in *Nityacharapradipa* (vol.I.P.358) which has been followed by Krishna Mishra in *Kalasarvasva* (p.384). From the stand point of *Kalasarvasva*, it is observed that Krishna Mishra fails to corroborate this tradition of Orissan *Vaisnavas* from the *Sastras*. Moreover he tries to vindicate this tradition from the local customs of Orissa using the very term "*ata eva bruddhah*".

According to the Vedic *Smarta*-tradition, the Brahmins are entitled to enter into *Sanyasa-Ashrama*. Others are not allowed for the same. They are allowed only upto the *Vanaprasthashrama*. In *Vaisnavic* tradition all are



allowed to follow *sanyasa-ashrama* according to Agamic provision irrespective of castes. This way the *Sanyasins*, initiated in *Vaisnavic dikhsya*, are divided into four sects namely *Sanaka, Sri, Brahman* and *Rudra*. In Orissa the *Sanyasins* of *Sanaka* sect are the worshippers of Krishna. The *Sanyasins* of *Shri* sect are marked to be the worshippers of Laksmi and Narayana or Sita and Rama. Unlike those, the *Sanyasins* of *Brahma* sect are the followers of Madhava. In Orissan Viasnavic tradition, the house-holder *Vaisnavas* belong to the *Shri* sect. Followers of this sect usually worship Laksmi and Narayana and that is why the house-holder *Vaisnavas* are advised to take initiation from a particular sectarian *guru* who is a householder *Vaisnava* himself. In case of a householder life, if the husband is initiated into a Vaisnavic faith and the wife desires to take initiation subsequently, she has to take permission from her husband. Krishna Mishra corroborates this tradition by quoting a Puranic *smriti*-text quoted in *Kalasarvasva* (p.369)

In case of a widow, the tradition goes in a different way. Under the rule of *Sri* sect the widow can take *Narayana-mantra* through a Vaisnavic initiation and becomes eligible to worship *Salagrama Narayana*. In Orissan Vaisnavism, the widow initiated to Vaisnavism is treated as a *Sanyasini* belonging to *kutichara*-category. The widows who belong to *Sri* sect are entitled to worship Krishna also alongwith Radha. But if they are initiated in *Sanaka* sect, they are allowed to worship Vasudeva Krishna instead of Gopinath Krishna or Radhakrishna. In this way the householder life for *Vaisnavas* in Orissa differs from sect to sect. For the *Vaisnavas* of *Brahma* sect, the paraferalia of Madhava school are to be followed. Although the *Nibandhakaras* have taken much pain in framing rules for *Vaisnavas* under *Smriti* principles, still they have taken *Bhagavata Mahapurana* as their chief authority.

Taking recourse to this sort of endeavour, Mitra Mishra the celebrated author of *Viramitrodaya* has compiled a volume devoting this area designating it as *Bhakti Prakasa*. For rationalization of Vaisnavic tradition in Orissa, Krishna Mishra has written *Bhakti Sarvasva* like *Bhakti Prakasa* incorporating all the *dicta* meant for Vaisnavism, the lines of which are found quoted in *Kalasarvasva*. But unfortunately *Bhaktisarvasva* has not been discovered so far. This way many facts of Vaisnavism in Orissa under Jagannath Cult are traced in the *Dharmasastra* works of Orissa.

It is submitted that

- (a) The Orissan *Vaisnavas* have accepted Jagannath as Krishna;
- (b) the Orissan *Vaisnavas* very prominently mark the association of Hari with Hara in *Dola Yatra*, as a result of which Saivism has been amalgamated in Vaisnavism and *Vice-versa*;
- (c) in Orissan Vaisnavism worship of Durga has been accepted. Here Visnu or Krishna is designated as Madhava. In this way Durga-Madhava worship has been evolved in course of time. During *Dussehra* in the month of *Asvina* Durga-Madhava Yatra is observed.

These three points show deeper degree of influence of *Smritis* on the Vaisnavism of Orissa.

It is suggested that an attempt may be made to trace out the inter-relationship of Vaisnavism, Saivism and Shaktism under Jagannath Cult.

Notes

1. *Asaktah Kartike masi Vratam Kuryat puroditam//Kalasara* Cuttack, 1971.P
2. Caitanyamatanyayigaudavaisha Vaistu asvinasu Klaikadasim yavat Vratamacaryate.



- Tara sukdaikadasyam parne samyak pramanam na drsyate. It tatpaksepi purnimaparyantam Vratakaranam samicinam. Tatha cacarasya sripurusottamaksetre jagannathaprasade darsanat *Kalasarvasva* p.25.
3. Bhuktvanya devanaivedyam dvijascandrayanam Caret. *Kalasarvasva*, Puri, 1997, p.379.
 4. Yadyapi vajapeyibhir Vidhinaivedyamapi dvijabha & samuktam tathapi tad vaisnavanisiddham. *Kalasarvasva*, p.380.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Yadyapi svapujakratavisnunaivedyam pujavaigunyaya svabhaksymiti vajapeyebhinuktam, tadapi tadvai gunyalpadoso visnunaivedyasana phalabhuma kupakhanakan..eva. *Kalasarvasva*, p.380
 7. Yo manarcya naro bhunkte bhavita tasya gaurava m' itye kamrapurne bhubanesvaranaivedyasya Visnudeyatvat 'na lingam bhuvavesvarah' iti tasya sivatvanisedhapurvaka visnutvati desacca lingarajanaivedyam smartavaisnavabhaksyam Pratiyate. *Kalasarvasva*, p.381.
 8. At eva brddhah-yanopavitabaddharyah samkha cakradikam malamutradau promckhayanti..... idamanusandhaya singhavajapeyibhirapi Snananantaram sandhyatah singhavajapeyibhirapi snananantaram sandhyatah purvam tulasipadmaksa-didharanamuktumiti dik. *Kalasarvasva*, p.384.
 9. "Strinam Visesat dadyat patibhaktismanvitam" patyanujnaktam diksamiyarthah. *Kalasarvasva*, p.369
 10. There are four grades of sannyasins namely Kuticara, bahudaka, hamsa and Paramahamsa. The window-sannyasins of Orissa are considered to be Kuticura category in Vaisnavic tradition.

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Bhakta Kabi Poet Sri Bhakta Charan Das and His Work 'Manobodha Chautisa'

Somanath Jena

In Hindu philosophy of *Vairagya*, *Gyana* and *Bhakti*, the works of Adi Sankar particularly, *Bhaja Govindam*, Bhatruhari's *Vairagya Satakam*, Vyasa's *Srimad Bhagabatam*, Mahabharat and *Srimad Bhagabat Gita* and Tulsi Das's *Sri Ramacharita Manas* have played effective and tremendous role among the learned scholars, pundits and devotees. But the '*Manobodha Chautisa*' written in Oriya by Bhakta Kabi, Bhakta Charan Das has exerted the same and somewhat more influence among the illiterate, literate, semi-literate common people all over Orissa, to make them conscious of immortality of name of God and the impermanence of other worldly name, fame, wealth, body, appearance etc. There were days, when, the students in *Chatasalis* before introduction of school system, used to get by heart this *Manobodha Chautisa* and recite with fine tone in chorus like in *Gurukula* system of study. The chanting and learning of *Manobodha Chautisa* was able to bring proper religious bent of mind among small children leading them to go for religious life, devotion and chanting of name of God in the midst of hurry activity. The thought power was directed to wards God instead of making them materialistic. The poem starts with each alphabet of Oriya language and ends covering almost all alphabets in Oriya. It has been written in simple language with words used in common talk and has been more thought provoking and piercing to mind being based on actual observation of the happening taking place day to day and depicting

universal truth to be imprinted in the brain both in conscious, subconscious and superconscious mind of children, youths, adults and elders. It teaches the life management and man-making and human resource development. Bhakta Kabi Madhusudan Rao's '*Barnobodha*' written in Oriya deals with some stray poems, having theme and direction to lead children to religious life. But Bhakta Charan Das, deals systematically, methodically, stage by stage relying on actual observation of situation in real life. This work is immortal though written in Oriya, but has not been rendered to foreign languages to attract due attention of readers of other languages.

In brief, '*Manobodh*' means 'to coax mind properly' and to accept some thought without hesitation. Poet asks the readers to have *Darshan* of black face of Lord Sri Jagannath as life is short, and nothing will go with man when the life departs from his body. The body to which, he dresses, with which he sleeps on decorated beds, will one day be food of jackals and vultures after death. Foul smell will come out from dead body. Many persons being your known ones, have already left the world being dead, but none of them have been able to take with them a single dust what to speak of other valuable riches. You are not chanting the name of *Guru* and Govind through your tongue, instead you are engrossed in earning riches. You will no more be owner of the said property after your death in respect of whatever you have acquired by earning and stored in the shape of house and within the house. You instead of being



considered their owner and their own will be declared as ghost. Your own wife will be protecting herself from the fear of your ghost, by taking means to tantrik tricks. After death, your family with other relatives will be purified by *Suddhi Kriya*. To cross the ocean of the world, you arrange and make time to serve and approach your *Guru*, i.e. religious teacher. Your life time is decreasing day by day. Your time to remain in life is becoming less and less and it is not known, when death will snatch you away. You make your appearance like beautiful doll, but look inside your body, you can see what wastes, horrified things are there inside your body, which looks beautiful outwardly being decorated by the covering of skin. Hence divert your mind from such horrible body and concentrate on Lord Sri Jagannath. Your mind instead of beautifying your body and outward appearance should get rid of conceit tricks and cunningness and chant name of Govind. After death, your body will be dead one and none will touch it as it will be treated as untouchable. Six sticks will be necessary customarily to make a carrier to bind the Dead body on it for being carried to burial / burning place. The Lord of death Yama does not have any sympathy for young boy, when he approaches to make a person on death. Hence, you should not be confident that you will live long. You must know that not a single man is immortal in this world. You can be saved from the worldly worries by chanting name of Lord Sri Jagannath. You are attracted towards *Jhula*, (shoulder bag) *Kantha* (thick cloth knit wrapper), towel and wearing clothes. You dash and jump to worldly activities like a mad man. But when you would stumble, you may face fatal death. You cannot get up to stand erect. Once you face death, you cannot rise to survive. Once a dry leaf falls down from tree, it can never be joined to the living tree to remain afresh again. You are restless day and night and plunged in worldly activities. It is all as good as day dream. Nobody will go with you, you alone has to depart from your body after death. Only name of God will accompany your journey

after death. You think very strongly and confidently that all belong to you, but at death when you will become lifeless, nobody shall be yours. Like a beautiful young lady is carried in a palanquin covered by the screen and doors, your inside body contains an altar quite sacred on which has been seated the invisible, all-pervading God. You will be cheated and repent at the time of death, unless prior to coming of your death you devote yourself to the service of *Sadguru* and worship, remember the name of Govind. You, call the name of Govind, which will remove fear and anxiety from your mind altogether. God has always set his ears alert to respond to your sincere call. He is like a boatman, who looks behind to take any other traveller who wants to sit on the boat, before sailing of the boat to cross the river. The body covered by beautiful skin has all nasty materials inside. It is like a drum which is empty inside, and your inside body is filled with emptiness. The bodily materials will be nothing and will be treated as waste material to be eschewed when life departs from it. If you give something in benevolent charity here during your life time you will get the same in your after life, in return. So liberally give charity as you can take nothing with you, when your body is in critical death bed and dying condition. You will feel breath less and then lifeless. You have to face the abode of God of Death and reap sorrow in many ways.

You boast and call your riches which you claim to have earned and therefore it is exclusively your own. But the real life situation shows that your body as a matter of fact does not belong to you after death. Many of your known persons have departed from this world. Still you do believe that your body will not die and you will enjoy your earned riches with immortal body for ever in this world. This is quite false notion ingrained in your mind. Look, many of the great kings were in this world, but ultimately they have left the world. None of them remained for ever in this world to enjoy their riches. The parasites will enjoy your hard earned, and accumulated wealth. They will build their houses in your land after your death.



Your body is the place of origin of many diseases. Such bodily and worldly enjoyment is for quite short period. Nobody can protect you and delay your death for a single moment. After death, you will be tortured in the abode of Lord of Death by Yama's attendants. You are endowed with conscience to distinguish between piety and impiety, and follow piety, but you do not do so. You engage yourself to accumulate riches not withstanding that you for that purpose resorted to sinful acts. If you are bent upon engaging yourself in this way, you cannot escape from this worldly bondage of activity. The world runs by piety. You will incur disrepute by doing sinful acts. The sinful acts will lead you to fall in hell, which will put you into untold miseries. You are not uttering the name Hari for a single moment, using your tongue. You are embracing the activity which will destroy your very purpose of life. You devote on impermanent affairs. Like in morning the Sun rises, so in all your body, the lotus-eyed God is pervading. You take shelter under His mercy. Fix your mind in lotus feet of Lord. Still there is time to change your way of life. Like flowers swim and swing in heavy wind and lose their identity, you engage yourself in remembrance of Lord and that will yield you true and rewarding fruit which is the very purpose of this human life. You should not on your own accord, bind the knotted rope around your neck to hang yourself to death. Repeatedly you are impressed not to go for the worldly affairs, guard yourself against sorrow of hell, by turning your mind Godwards in time, so that you cannot repent in hell. From the very start, worship and serve God under the guidance of a Sadguru. You take it granted that nobody can cross the vast ocean, when the boat is in broken and leaking condition. You have to be strong by relying on the infallible shelter of God. God is very near to the sincere and devotional thought and is far away from non-devotional thought. This life has no meaning and is spent in wasteful way by engaging in false delusive dream like activity. After death, people will call you dead. You tell others die, but you yourself will one day be dead. An animal once takes birth in the world will sure to

meet death one day. To keep your reputation intact, chant and remember Sri Hari. Apprehending the bondage to face from the side of Yama, you think the greatness of Lord Sri Jagannath. The ocean of world looks apparently beautiful but the inner depth is filled with hellish affairs. Never rely on the image of appearance, as neither the king nor the subjects will survive for ever in this world. You are daily seeing in your eyes and hearing through your ears this reality of life. Still you are tempted to accumulate wealth and riches by hook and crook. Temptation brings ruin. You cannot get human life, when you aspire to have one more life. You are wasting your rare human birth, by engaging yourself in worldly materialistic affairs. You will not benefit out of this, your very capital will be lost in the business, what to speak of earning more profit. Hence remember Sri Krishna, chant His name, serve Him, meditate on His lotus feet, be content on remembering Him. do not make yourself ashamed of being tossed hither and thither in mundane affairs. Realize that all are false, unreal, but Hari's name is only true and real. Do not think that in ocean of world all are real. Your life span is decreasing day by day. To cross the ocean of sorrow chant Sri Hari's name. Do not believe in the immortality of body and do not entangle in bodily enjoyment, by deviating from serving to God and by neglecting remembrance of Lord, one leaves aside his well being and makes clear his path towards fall. Once the body becomes dead, you will not get it again alive. Before its death, make *japa* of name of Sri Hari to make your present life purposeful. Do not rely on the body which is not lasting. It is a bad way of life to devote mind to bodily enjoyment instead of utilizing the life for service of God. This is the call of Bhakta Das to mind, appealing to change life style accordingly ?

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The Essence of Patriotism in Temple Multiplication - Kulada Jagannath

Dr. Braja Kishor Padhi

Once upon a time Kulada was the heart of Ghumusar and an important place in South Orissa. In the west side of Kulada, there are two Byaghra Devi temples. The oldest Byaghra Devi temple is located in a stone cave in the south side of the hill. The second Byaghra Devi temple facing south is at the foot of the hill. The most ancient east facing Jagannath temple of Ghumusar is at the back side of the Byaghra Devi temple facing towards Kulada. Pratap Dhananjaya Bhanja ruled over Ghumusar kingdom from 1637 AD to 1701 AD.¹ It is known from Antarigaon Copper Plate² that his ancestors were the followers of Vaishnavim. Upendra Bhanja and other Bhanja rulers wrote many *Kavyas* on Lord Jagannath. During the reign of Patali Gopinath Bhanja due to his family relationship with Kapilendra Deva of Surya Dynasty, the Jagannath cult reached its pinnacle and was popularized not only in Ghumusar but also all over Orissa. But none of the Bhanja rulers evinced any interest for the construction of a Jagannath temple. Pratap Dhananjaya Bhanja was the first ruler, who brought of the three Gods idols like Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra.³ Srikrushna Bhanja constructed a temple at Kulada for those three images during his reign.

The Jagannath temple of Kulada is surrounded by a great wall. There are two entrance gates in east and south sides of the compound wall. Some steps are connecting the

compound wall with the base level of the ground. A couple of elephants are seen standing on both sides of the entrance gate. Two audacious lions are sitting on those elephants symbolizing the significance of the then ruling dynasty. The *Arun Stambha* (Pillar of Sun God) is erected at the central point of the east side entrance gate. The images of Chhinnamasta, Maithuna, Bhairabi and four-handed Mahisamardini Durga are fitted on the back side of this gate. This Jagannath temple is having two chambers only like *Jagamohana* and *Garbhagriha*, A huge stone peached seclusion for the devotees to beseech Gods and a bathing stage for *Sankirtana* and other religious ceremonies etc. are at the front side of the temple. The images of Jara and Bashu Savara are installed at the entrance gate of Jagannath. The nine planets (*Nava Grahas*) are at the frontal portion of the gate. The sanctum is square in size. The roof portion has corbelled ceiling. It looks like a pyramid and the centre point is square shaped. There is no '*panasha*' sculpture at the centre point. The *Jagamohana* has two entrance gates, one is in the east side and the other is in the south side. The two '*Khilanas*' in isosceles triangle manner are carved on the eastern and western sides of *Jagamohana*, the purpose of which is to reduce the weight of the temple.⁴ The images of Jaya and Vijaya are erected at the entrance gate and the Kirtimukha or the Face of Glory is at the top of



the gate. Generally the image of Gaja-Laxmi should have been carved on the architrave of the gate of either the *Jagamohana* or *Garbhagriha*, but instead, the very panel has been left empty. The great wooden images of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are adorning the *Ratna Mandapa*.

Generally the outer sculptural art of a temple allures the minds of the myriad spectators and innumerable devotees as well. Both the *Jagamohana* and *Garbhagriha* of this temple are full of sculptural perfection. The *Jagamohana* has been constructed combining the art of *Pidha* or *Potala* and *Rekha* styles and has a *Pancharatha* plan. The *Bada* portion contains *Tala Jangha*, *Bandhana* and *Upara Jangha*. The *Bandhana* has been divided into three parts. The *Gandi* has been again divided into a *Kanti*, in between seven and six number of *Potalas*. The images are kept in each *Kanika* and *Anuratha Paga* of *Gandi*. The *Beki* portion of the temple is beautified by the four bold and beautiful Bhairavi images being fitted in the centre in all four sides. To add to the majesty of the architecture four life size lions lead to the centre from the four sides in a jumping posture. Eight sculptures are under the *Amalaka Sila*. The temple has been constructed in *Pancha ratha* plan. It can be divided into three parts like *Bada*, *Gandi* and *Mastaka*. The *Pabhaga*, *Tala Jangha*, *Bandhana*, *Upara Jangha* etc. are in *Bada* portion. The main subsidiary deities are in three sides of the temple. They are in separate chambers adjoining to the main temple, instead of the niches of the temple walls. The separate chambers are located in the combining portion of *pidha* and *Rekha* forming like a miniature temple. Further the gates are found in three sides of those miniature temples. The upper part of those miniature shrines are also divided into seven *pidhas* in two tiers. The jumping lions, twin lions, Bhairaba images etc. are

also found in the *Gandi* portion of these miniature shrines. The height of these subsidiary deities are about three feet in height and two feet in width. The *Kanika Paga*, *Anuratha Paga* and miniature temples are carved on those portions. The lion sitting on an elephant and jumping lion images are carved in both down side and up side of the *Raha Paga* sections. *Mastaka*, the head portion of the temple is quite different in comparison to other temple architecture. As per the rules and regulations of the temple design there should be one *Amalaka Sila*. But this principle has been violated in this temple and two *Amalaka Sila* are kept along with one *Beki*, which has opened a new era in the pages of temple annals. Generally the *Mastaka* portion of a temple consists of *Beki Amalaka Sila*, *Khapuri*, *Kalasa*, *Chakra* and the emblem. At the *Beki* portion of the first *Amalaka Sila*, the twin lions and Bhairabi images are fitted in four corners and four sides respectively. Two *Bandhanas* are carved at the upper parts. On the *Bandhana*, the first *Amalaka Sila* has been divided into thirty-six divisions. Again there is another *Beki*. There are eighteen motifs on that *Beki*. But there is no *Bandhana* on the body of the *Beki*. The second *Amalaka Sila* is on that *Beki* having seventy-two divisions. The *Kalasa* is on this second *Amalaka Sila*. The wings of the *Kalasa* is projected towards four corners of the temple. The *Kalasa* bears the *Chakra* emblem. Besides these, there are many other carvings in the angles and corners of the temples, which need meticulous study.

Shrikrushna Bhanja reigned Ghumusar for twenty years from 1754 A.D. to 1773 A.D.⁵ During his reign French Lt. D.Bussy attacked Ghumusar in 1757 A.D. for the first time. This battle was a great challenge to the inhabitants of Ghumusar. Shrikrushna Bhanja applied his every war effort by taking hearty help from the people of Ghumusar. By that time the influence of



Jagannath cult spread all over India. The Jagannath temple was attacked by the non-Hindus people for many times. At that crucial moment, the people of Sambalpur and South Orissa brought the three idols from Puri and kept them very secretly. Shrikrushna Bhanja prayed to Lord Jagannath during this perilous period and fought against the French. He won the battle. The large French army bowed their heads in the battle. They were defeated in the battle field and were put to a very wretched position⁶ and their dream to conquer Ghumusar vanished from their mind for over.

At that time the cruel ambition of the Britishers pervaded all over India. They were trying to bring India under their control. As Kulada was the capital of the then Ghumusar, they attacked Kulada. Knowing the attitude of the Britishers, Shrikrushna Bhanja directed his warriors well in advance to remain ready. The British force attacked Kulada fort in 1768 A.D.⁷ In this battle the warriors of Shrikrushna Bhanja participated with full vigour. In those woeful days, Shrikrushna Bhanja alongwith the inhabitants of Ghumusar prayed to Lord Jagannath for His benediction. By the grace of Lord Jagannath, Shrikrushna Bhanja triumphed over the battle.⁸

It was not a matter of fun to defeat the great British force by the people of Ghumusar nor was it possible to get freedom from them. Celebrated author Tarini Charan Rath has discussed about Ghumusar in his Ghumusar History, *Rushikulya Kavyas* and other *Kavyas*. Chintamani Mohanty has also vividly narrated in his *Ghumusar Kavya* about three important places like Ghumusar, Surangi and Mahendra Giri. Though these two writers have deeply researched into the early history of Ghumusar, still it is a matter of surprise that they had not realized the patriotism of Shrikrushna Bhanja. Rather they failed to mark it in this regard. Pratap Dhananjaya Bhanja got

carved the three images of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra. His highness Shrikrushna Bhanja besought and solicited Lord Jagannath's benediction and able to subdue the foreign military force. Here he promised to establish a temple for the spread of Jagannath cult. The king forgot the bravery of the people of Ghumusar. After the triumph the king constructed the Jagannath temple in which he kept two *Amalaka Sila* at the head portion of the temple to remember those two victories. The inner meaning of the *Amalaka Sila* located in the head portion of the temple is very important. Though these two symbolic *Amalaka Sila* broke the rules of the theory of temple architecture, still it is glorifying to note the devotion towards Lord Jagannath, recognized as the spirit of victory till date through this. These two *Amalaka Silas* are symbolising the tear of joy of Shrikrushna Bhanja.

Figures of warriors and common people, more than twenty in number are carved in the *Kanika Paga*, *Anuratha Paga*, *Raha Paga* and other adjoining portions of the temple. Among them some are wearing the clothes beginning from wrist till the end of the legs. The trousers which they are wearing are long and marked with many straight lines. The shirts are stitched like gowns and covering the middle portion of the body. There are belts in the waist portion. The straight lines are carved in the body of the shirts. The hair touches the shoulders. In the head portion the turbans are tied like rope in a coil style. The beards and moustaches are carved straight. They are holding the shield in their left hand and sword in their right hand. Every warrior is having sound and energetic physique. The various categories of dresses found in different parts of India can be marked from the dresses, ornament etc. put on by them. Most probably the styles of Marathi, Muslims and Oriya Bhanjas are identically marked. Besides these, the motifs like *Alasa*



Kanyas of Konark are also carved on the body of this temple. The art and architecture are not only distinctly marking the social status of the then people of Ghumusar but also no doubt the thought of Shrikrushna Bhanja.

Many historians have tried to assign the construction period of this temple. Scholar Ashoka Kumar Rath has fixed the construction date of the temple to 1760 A.D. Shrikrushna Bhanja at first fought with the Frenchs and then with the Britishers. He has imprinted the symbol of victory on the body of the temple. Considering the then prevailing situation of the state, life style, the art and architecture of the temple, it is right to declare that the construction work was under taken in 1760 A.D. but the work was finished after the closure of the war between Shrikrushna Bhanja and the Britishers. So the construction work started in 1760 A.D. and finished in all respect in 1770 A.D. by taking ten years time.

The beginning of the temple architecture in Orissa is very ancient. But the architecture of the temple of Jagannath of Kulada is unique of its kind. Reflection of patriotism in the art and architecture is a new tradition. There is no second example to compare it. Now the maintenance of the temple is being done by the local people. Its further development and maintenance are also done by them. There should be a good and perfect conservation of these historically significant temples by the Government and the public bodies as well, as this temple culture will restore our past glory.

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Rani Suryamani Patamahadei : An Extraordinary Lady In Puri Temple Administration

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Suryamani Patamahadei, the widow of the Gajapati king Birakishore Dev played a crucial role in the Puri Temple Administration at a very critical phase in the history of the Srimandir. She exercised immense control over revolting *Sevayats* and showed keen interest in the Temple Administration. She faced a lot of obstacles and adversities over a long span of time, but by dint of her extraordinary zeal and enthusiasm she prevailed upon them and fought legal battle with the British rulers to win in the long run and protected the temple culture from the alien invasion. Her extraordinary qualities of hand, head and heart won her an enviable position not only within the Temple, but also throughout the Hindu world.

Suryamani Patamahadei born in 1818 at Sonepur was the daughter of Raja Daityari Singh. During her childhood and youth, She was quite intelligent and beautiful. She was efficient in archery and hunting. While royal family from Sonepur were going to Puri, at night Suryamani killed a crocodile with a sword as it was near the camp of their stay and could have devoured them. Her spirit was appreciated by all. Raja of Puri Ramachandra Dev having seen this pretty princess wanted to get his son married with her. The marriage was held without delay and Raja Ram Chandra Dev expired in 1854. His son Birakishore Dev ascended the throne and became

the Superintendent of the Temple. In 1859 Birakishore Dev died after suffering from protracted illness. Before his death he had adopted a son of the Raja of Bada Khemundi. The Rani Patamahadei was extremely shocked at the death of the king, and then she gathered strength to face the crisis.

Rani Suryamani, in spite of the conspiracy of the British government, was successful to make her adopted son Dibyasingha the Superintendent of the Temple. But there was unrest among the *Sevayats* and indiscipline in the entire temple administration. In 1866 the tragic famine took place, on account of which everywhere there was agony, apathy and death. Suryamani in this juncture distributed the cooked *Mahaprasad* among the hungry people and the British Government was happy with her noble gesture. In 1875 on attainment of adulthood of the prince Rani Patamahadei relinquished her duties as Superintendent of the Temple. Raja Didyasingha Deb took over this charge from the Rani. But Dibyasingha was indifferent to the temple administration and insensitive to the people in general and *Sevaks* and priests in particular. In 1878 he was charge sheeted and convicted of killing a Sadhu called Siba Das. He was deported to Andaman on life imprisonment.

Rani was not disturbed so much and tried to maintain the royal prestige and position. She



took control of the temple management as the Superintendent on behalf of Dibyasingh Deb's minor son Jenamani Jagannath. She sent application to the District Judge, Cuttack, who granted the permission. But this time Rani could not properly control the temple administration, particularly at the time of festivals like Rath Yatra, 1879. Due to laxity in administration *Nitis* could not be held in time and the pilgrims from far and near did not get *Mahaprasad* in time. The British Government contemplated to interfere in the temple administration. They passed the Puri Temple Act of 1880 according to which the Superintendent of the Temple was vested in a Committee of Management and the King of Puri would remain a nominal head on hereditary ground.

This raised a mass protest and was taken as an attack of the alien Government on the honour of the Gajapati king or queen as well as the entire Hindu religion. The famous Pundits, Sadhus, Mahants and eminent persons raised a storm of protests and strongly supported the Superintendence of the Puri temple by Suryamani Patamahadei. A very cogent and strong worded petition was prepared under the direction of the outstanding Oriya advocate Madhusudan Das, who also forcefully pleaded the case in the same month. The Statesman of April 5, 1887 reported this as follows: "There is the strongest reason to believe that the Maharani of Khurda who is the guardian of the minor prince is not open to any blame for her management of the shrine and her administration has been marked throughout by great unselfishness, self-sacrifice and devotion."

Sir Stewart Bayley, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in April 1887 wanted a compromise to save their face in this case and sent for Madhusudan Das, who was the Law agent of the Rani and Metcalfe, the Commissioner of Orissa. It was decided to settle the case amicably. The compromise deed was prepared, which stated that Rani would have the lone of the services of a

Government officer to manage the affairs of the temple till the Raja came of age. Hence Rani Suryamani Patamahadei remained the Superintendent of the Puri Temple during the long period of minority of Raja Mukund Dev. Rani as per compromise appointed Harekrushna Das, *Sheristadar* of the Judge's Court at Cuttack as the Manager of the Temple. The Government's proposal of setting up a Managing Committee was dropped.

Hence the compromise was an historic victory of the Rani as well as for the honour of the Temple and Hindu Community dwindled in the recent past. During her long tenureship as Superintendent, there was peace, order and discipline in the Temple Administration. The relation of Rani with the vast array of Sevaks and Priests was very cordial. In 1897 Raja Mukunda Dev came of age and Rani vested the Superintendence to him. Undoubtedly Rani Patamahadei was extraordinary in her intelligence, disposition and personality. She will be ever remembered and respected by all devotees of Lord Jagannath.

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Sri Ratnabhandar of Srimandir

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The famous Ganga monarch Chodaganga, after constructing the present Sri Jagannath Temple in the 12th century A.D., confirmed the old endowments of Jagannath, made new endowments and laid the foundation of a sound administration of the temple. *Madala Panji* eulogistically records the extensive endowments in land and fabulous gifts of gold made by king Anangabhima Deva, who was credited with organising the *Chatisanijoga* and instituting numerous *Bhogas* and *Yatras*. Then the Suryavamsi rulers who succeeded the Gangas enriched the coffers of temple by their numerous gifts. Among the movable properties of Lord Jagannath, besides the temple elephants, horses, furnitures and utensils of various kinds, the most precious gems, diamonds and other semiprecious stones are preserved in the Ratna Bhandar. This treasury of the temple has been enriched by the contribution of the devotees from all over India among whom the Hindu kings of Orissa were the most illustrious donors. According to *Madala Panji* king Anangabhima Deva, in addition to his numerous grants of land, had donated 2,50,000 *marhas* (weight current in Medieval Orissa : 1 *marha* = 70 grains = $\frac{1}{2}$ total = 5.8319 grams) of gold for preparing the ornaments of the Lord. The Suryavamsi rulers who succeeded the Gangas on the throne of Orissa were great devotees of Lord Jagannath and enriched the Ratna Bhandar with

their liberal gifts of gold and other jewels. One of the inscriptions of Gajapati Kapilendra Deva discovered on the wall of the temple of Jagannath records that in the 41st Anka (1466 A.D) he came to worship Jagannath and gave a number of utensils and ornaments. A supply of gold was brought by a number of officers and placed with other offerings in the audience hall. According to the rules and practices of the Temple, whatever jewels, gold and silk are offered to the deities by the pilgrims are to be stored in Ratna Bhandar. The fabulous riches of the temple of Jagannath had induced the Muslim invaders to raid and plunder the temple from time to time, the worst being that of Kalapahad in 1668. During the time of Raja Purusottama Deva of Khurda even a Rajput General named Kesodas Maru was induced by the Mughal Subedar of Cuttack to plunder the temple of Jagannath. On the pretext of coming on a pilgrimage to Puri during the Car Festival, Kesodas occupied the sacred temple by force and looted it and stopped the daily Puja, ceremonies, etc., of Lord Jagannath. Raja Purushottam Deva came with a mighty force to rescue the temple from the hands of Kesodas but was defeated. In spite of several raids and plunder the Ratna Bhandar of Jagannath still remains a valuable asset of the temple, M.M. Chakravarti noted in 1893 that many of the ornaments given to the god in 1466 A.D. were still in use.



The total list of the valuable jewels of Lord Jagannath which includes gold ornaments, pearls, diamonds, corals etc., is to be found in the Record-of-Rights (Part-IV) prepared under Puri Sri Jagannath Temple Act., 1952. There are 150 items of gold ornaments in *Bahar Bhandar* (outer treasury) which include three gold necklaces (*Haridakanthi Mali*) weighing more than 120 tolas (1 tola = 11,6638 grams) each; Suna Shri Bhuja and Sri Payara of Jagannath and Balabhadra weighing 818 and 710 tolas respectively; Suna Mukutas or gold crowns of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra weighing 610, 434 and 275 tolas respectively, and various other gold ornaments some of which are set with precious stones. The *Bhitar Bhandar* (inner treasure) has 180 items of Jewellery which include 74 items of pure gold ornaments some of which weigh more than 100 tolas, plates of gold, pearls, diamonds, corals etc., and 146 items of silver articles, some weighing more than 500 tolas each. The outer treasury with three locks and the inner treasury with double locks were in charge of the Raja of Puri who was the Superintendent of the temple. One key was remaining with the Raja, one with the *Bhandar Nayak* and the third key of the outer treasury with the *Bhandar Mekap*.

In accordance with the provisions of Sri Jagannath Temple Act, 1954, Section 15 safe custody of the Ratna Bhandar is now vested with the Sri Jagannath Temple Managing Committee.

Besides the income derived from the *Satais Hazari Mahal* (The Maratha had assigned certain lands with a revenue of Rs.27,000 for the support of the temple of Jagannath at Puri which came to be known as *Satais Hazari Mahal* for the amount of revenue it was yielding) and the *Ekharajat Mahal* (The *Ekharajat* or *Ikharjat* is an Arabic

word meaning expenses. *Ekharajat Mahal* literally means land assigned for expenses.) The important sources of income of the temple are the sums realized by annually leasing out the rights of what is known as *Baje Mahals*. The main *Baje Mahals* are the right to prepare and sell *Nirmalya* inside the temple premises, the right to sell sweetmeats, the right to sell earthen lamps (*Dipa*) inside the temple; the right to collect money from the pilgrims at Rohini Kunda, Shri Gundicha Mandira and Paduka Kunda; the right to sell flour and spices in the temple, etc. Among other sources of income mention may be made of the fees realised from the pilgrims for having their names inscribed on the stone floors of the temple enclosure, fees realised from the *Sevakas* at *Sadhibandha* or first appointment, the sale proceeds of *Kothabhoga mahaprasad* after *Kheis* are distributed to various *Sevakas*, Sale proceeds of the wood and cloth used in the cars, fees realised from *Dhwajalagi* or for having flags and strips of coloured cloth hung from the temple tower, *Parimanik* or fees realised from the pilgrims for going near the deities beyond the time fixed for *Sahanamela*, fees for using fans, fly-flaps or lighted torches before the gods, and other miscellaneous receipts. Besides some other lands and houses in Puri town and other places are under direct possession of the temple.

Receipts from *Pindika* accounts for a substantial income to the temple. Whatever is offered to the deities on the *Ratnavedi* either in the jars placed there or on the *Simhasana* goes to the temple fund after paying a small share to certain *Sevakas*.

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Lord Jagannath of Jaguleipatna

Braja Paikaray

Jagannath temple, popularly known as "Srimandir" of "Srikshetra" is the nerve centre of Orissan culture and Lord Jagannath is the real representative of the social and cultural tradition of the Oriya race. Hence the culture of Orissa is better known around the world as the Jagannath Culture.

From cradle to grave Lord Jagannath is intensely and deeply involved with the life of the Oriyas. The holy name of Lord Jagannath is engraved on the palm-leaf "Jataka" of each and every new-born Oriya baby. The holy "Mahaprasad" is being used at the time of fixing the marriage of the Oriya youth and lastly the holy "Nirmalya" is needed at the death bed of the Oriyas. Hence Lord Jagannath is inseparable from Oriyas and Orissa.

Lord Jagannath is not only the presiding deity of the Oriyas but he is closely related to them. He can not be compared with any Gods, Goddesses or Prophets of the world, because he does not wait to be worshiped on his "Ratna Singhasan" by his followers or devotees at the darkest hour of the Oriyas. With the rise and fall of the Oriya race Lord Jagannath has mingled his divine self with the common man and there is ample evidence of Lord Jagannath's involvement in safeguarding the prestige and dignity of Orissa. When the Gajapati King was insulted by the King

of Kanchi, Lord Jagannath joined in the military expedition to Kanchi as a horse riding *Paik* alongwith his elder brother Lord Balabhadra and the king of Kanchi met a crushing defeat. His arrogance was mingled with the honour of the Gajapati King Purusottam Dev and the dignity of the Oriya race was restored.

The famous poet Jayadev while writing the *Gita Govinda* once failed to complete a difficult stanza and prayed to Lord Jagannath for help. The Lord took pen in his divine hand and soon completed the unfinished stanza of the poem.

Lord Jagannath is a lover of music and he once left the Srimandir for a brinjal field being attracted by the lucid tune of a young Oriya lady who was singing *Gita Govinda*. Further the Lord can create human hair on the head of his *Daru Bigraha* in order to protect his *Sebayat* from the red eyes of the Gajapati King. The Lord can also direct the Gajapati in his dream to beg apology from Poet Dinakrushna and to honour the Poet. In order to crush the arrogance and self-ego of his *Sebayats* the Lord preferred to ride the Sand-chariot of his beloved devotee Bhakta Balaram leaving his own chariot *Nandighosha*.

Lord Jagannath makes no distinction between any caste, creed or religion. He loves to listen the song of Yaban Salbeg and receives the coconut being sent by his devotee Dasia Bauri.



While at Srimandir Lord Jagannath lives the life of an aristocrat, takes delicious food, wears fine dresses and enjoys the dance of Mahari at night before his sleep. But during any debacle of the Oriya race and at historical junctures of Orissa the Lord adjusts his divine self, lives *incognito* at *Hental* jungle and *Nalabana* of Chilka and is satisfied with the *bhog* of black berry being offered to him leaving aside his aristocracy.

Lord Jagannath belongs to both Aryans and Non-aryans. Though Srimandir, Puri is his permanent abode, Lord Jagannath manifests his divine self in forests, in villages and in different Mathas in the nook and corners of the state of Orissa.

Once upon a time, Khurda, the land of Khandayats and Paiks was the capital of the Gajapati Kings. Lord Jagannath had joined in the military expedition to Kanchi as a horse riding Paik and hence the Lord desired to manifest his divine self at Jaguleipatna, Khurda having full limbs and accordingly Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra have manifested themselves having full hands and legs. As per the version of the local people Lord Jagannath has manifested himself here as the "Kalki Abtar". But as per the local legend a holy man namely Mahant Raghubar Das was an ardent devotee of the Lord. He established a Matha at village Jaguleipatna when the village was encircled with forest and thick bushes. Once in his dream Mahant Raghubar Das was ordered by Lord Jagannath to establish the *Daru Bigraha* with full limbs in his *Matha* and to offer *Seva Puja*. It

was also ordered by the Lord to collect the holy *daru* from the jungle of "Beruan village" near Khurda. As per the Lord's wish Mahanta Raghubar Das collected the holy *daru* and established the three *Bigrahas* at Jaguleipatna Matha and started the Ratha Yatra in the year 1918 with the co-operation of the local people.

After some years a strange thing occurred. The house in which the *Bigrahas* were offered *Seva Puja* was completely burnt but the fire had not touched the *Daru Bigrahas*.

After the death of Mahanta Raghubar Das his chief disciple Digambar Baba continued the *Seva Puja* of the Lord and the Ratha Yatra was also observed as usual. But after the death of Digambar Baba the Jaguleipatna Matha was completely forgotten from the minds of the people.

In the year 1980 due to the sincere effort of the local people a concrete building was constructed for the *daru bigrahas* and one "Garuda Stamba" was installed at Jaguleipatna Matha and Ratha Yatra was restored with much enthusiasm. In the present days the number of tourists, research scholars and visitors have increased to Jaguleipatna Matha to have a Darshan of the full limbed Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra.

Braja Paikray is an Additional Govt. Pleader and staying at 342/B, Jagamara (Barabari) Bhubaneswar-30





Jainism and Buddhism in Jagannath Culture

Pabitra Mohan Barik

Lord Jagannath of Puri occupies a significance position in the socio-cultural and religious history of not only Orissa but also India. The early history of Lord Jagannath is very difficult to know because of non availability of facts and recorded history. It is too difficult to

bring out the real picture of Sri Jagannath during ancient period. Puri is one of the foremost religious centres of India. Culture of Sri Jagannath is still shrouded in mystery. Many well known scholars and researchers are also trying to bring out the origin of Sri Jagannath. Eminent scholars have described about the relation of Jagannath culture with Jainism, Buddhism and other cults. In incient times

Jainism spread all over Kalinga. Mahapadma Nanda, the king of Magadha conquered Kalinga and took away "Kalinga Jeena" image to Magadha. Pandit Nilakantha Das argued that this Jeena image is actually that of Sri Jagannath. According to him the word Jagannath is derived from Jeenanath. He also wrote that "Jagannath is primarily a Jaina institution". The relation in between Jainsim and Sri Jagannath Culture is quite

interesting. Jain philosophers and devotees have also compared Tri Ratna of Jainism with Sri Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra. A prominent, historian late Kedar Nath Mahapatra also supported this view. Some scholars

advocate the theory of the Jaina origin of Jagannath. There is great similarity between the images of Nilamadhava and Jaina Tri Ratna. Jainism was very much popular in Orissa, and archaeological remains and Jaina images recovered from various places of Orissa prove its importance. Hatigumpha inscription of Kharavela highlights the worship of "Adijina" in Kalinga. This worship was done at "Pithunda".



According to some scholars Pithunda is identifiable with Puri. Nilakantha Das argued that the Mahaprasad of Jagannath is Kaivalya and this is a derivative of the Kaivalya or the concept of salvation of the Jainas.

Mahayan Buddhists propogated that the image of Lord Jagannath was really that of the Buddha. Tri Ratna of Buddhism Buddha, Dharma



and Sangha are compared with Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra. Scholars like Prof. Wilson, James Fergusson and Gen. Cunningham have referred to the Buddhist origin of Jagannath. Cunningham argues that the figures of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are the three devotional representations of the Buddhist symbol of Triratna "Buddha, Dharma and Sangha". Brahma that is placed at the navel of Jagannath is the nothing but the Buddhist tooth relic that was brought from Kusi nagar to Kalinga. Buddhists believe in worship of physical relics after death. The annual bathing ceremony (Snana Jatra) and the car festival (Ratha Jatra) are Buddhist practices. Cunningham also follows the writing of Yuan Chwang. The Chinese pilgrim speaks of Chelitola on the eastern sea board. According to Cunningham Chelitola was " the present town of Puri." Ratha Jatra of Jagannath resembles the procession of the Buddhist image, as has been written by Fa- Hian. Buddhism does not believe in any class or caste distinction. During Ratha Jatra and other festivities, caste distinction is not found in the Jagannath temple. The term Jagannath was applied to Adi Buddha by Raja Indrabhuti

of Sambal in his work " Gyana Siddhi ". Adi Buddha is even now called Jagannath in Nepalese Buddhism. Assimilation of Buddhism into Brahminical Hinduism took place after Buddha was taken in as the 9th Hindu *Avatara* (Incarnation of Lord Visnu) as shown on the panel of ten incarnations (*Dasavatara*) inside the Jagannath temple at Puri. After the decline of Buddhism Jagannath might have become New Buddha. Jagannath cult did not belong to any particular sect. It is the point of assimilation of all sects and religions. It can be said that the cult of Jagannath is not just a faith, but a way of life that awakens the innerself to attain celestial happiness.

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Balabhadra Upasana and Tulasi Kshetra

Er. Nirakar Mahalik

On the full-moon day in the month of *Shrabana*, the birth day of Balabhadra is celebrated by performing special Nitis. Lord Baladeva (Balabhadra) is the presiding deity in the Baladeva Jew Temple at Kendrapara in the heart of Tulasi Kshetra although the three deities Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath are enshrined in the Baladeva Jew temple. The name of the temple is said so as the temple Jagannatha at Puri is named after Lord Jagannath. According to Prof. Prabhat Mukherjee, in about 5th century A.D., Sankarsana and Vasudeva came to be known as Jagannatha and Balarama in Orissa.¹ *Brihat Samhita* of Varahamihira (6th century A.D) enjoins to place Ekanamsa between Baladeva and Krshna.

Meghasthenes, the Greek ambassador in the court of the Maurya Emperor Chandragupta also refers to the *satvatas* and the worship of Vasudev-Krshna. Historian R.G.Bhandarkar observes thus, " If the Vasudev-Krshna worship prevailed in the time of the first Maurya, it must have originated long before the establishment of Maurya dynasty, and my assertion that it owes its origin to the stream of thought which began with *Upanishads* and culminated in the east in Buddhism and Jainism and arose about the time of the latter, is conformed."² So we find that the cult of Vasudev-Krshna and Sankarshan

(Basudeva) came into being long before 4th Century B.C

Ghusundi inscription mentions '*Pujasila Prakaro narayanavatica*' which has been translated as " enclosing wall of the stone(Object) of worship called Narayana Vatika (compound)"³ and dedicating the same to gods Sankarsana Baladeva, who was Lord of all. Hence we notice that only two forms: (or *Vyuhas*) Sankarsana and Vasudev and not the four (Sankarsana, Vasudev, Pradyumna and Aniruddha) have developed by this time. Moreover Sankarsana has been mentioned first and evidently been given a prior position (cf. *Sankarsana-Vasudevabhyam*). Above place Ghosundi which is near to Nagari in the Chitorgarh district of Rajasthan (Rajputana) was also a seat of the Bhagavat religion. A stone image of Balarama⁴ which is now preserved in Lucknow Provincial Museum is a sure proof that his worship was prevalent in Mathura during the Sunga period (2nd Century B.C). The deity holds club (*Musala*) in his right hand and plough in the left.

Balabhadra is known as elder brother of Vasudeva. Rebati Raman, Talanka, Musali, Hali, Kamapal, Kalandi Vedan, Pralaghna, Achutagranja, Bala, Rohineya, Nilambara, Sirapani , Halayudha, Baladeva, Balarama and Sankarsana are the sixteen other names of



Balabhadra.⁵ He is the God of Destruction for which strength (*Bala*) is necessary. So his name is Sankarsana, Balaram, Balabhadra and Baladeva for his vigour.

Not for the strength of destroyer but for his wisdom, Balabhadra is the 'Siva' of the Universe. In the *Agama (Tantra) sastra*, Siva is the *Paramaguru*. When Siva describes the essence of *Tantras*, He is knowledge, called '*Dakshina Murty*'. Balabhadra is white, as if He is powdered by *Bhasma*. So he is the incarnation of Siva.⁶ In the 12th century A.D. Kavi Jayadeva of Orissa also described in Gitagovinda as ;

*"Bahasi Bapusi Bishade Basanga Jaladavang
Hala hati viti milita Jamunavang
Keshaba dhruta ! Haladhara rupa
Jaya Jagadisha Hare."*

Lord Balabhadra was worshipped during 4th-5th century A.D. in Uttar Tosali. The entire ancient Uttar (northern) Tosali is named as Tulasi Kshetra, but the present Tulasi-kshetra is the modern Kendrapara.⁷ The area extending from the Bay of Bengal in the east, the high hill of Lalitagiri as well as the Assia mountain range in the north-west, river Baitarani in the north and river Mahanadi in the south, is the part of north Tosali or UCHA (UDRA) of Hiuen-Tsang. The present Kendrapara district is surrounded by three major rivers of Orissa forming a deltaic region. The low delta region is submerged by sea water and river water during extreme rainy season leaving high silt.

This deltaic region is very fertile for the production of agricultural goods. People here worship the God of Agriculture and oxen/bull. The Lord Balabhadra of Kendrapara was first enshrined by Gopal Siddha Das, a cow-herd boy of that area. It is very interesting to note that Siva is represented as a cultivator who ploughs his fields, sows seeds, takes out weeds, cut grass

and carries it home on his head as appears in the medieval Bengali literature.⁸ Regarding the festival it is stated that "In the half-Buddhistic and half-Saivite '*Gambhira* and *Gajan* festivals, which appear to have originated at an early date and must have preceded Ramai Pandit's work, there are references to the agricultural role of Siva, on the *Ahara puja*, a feature common to both *Gambhira* and *Gajana* festivals. Cultivation by Siva is represented by bhaktas or devotees before the spectators."⁹ We know that the wisdom of Balabhadra is the Siva of the Universe. Hence Siva-Balabhadra is the God of Agriculture from the ancient times.

Iconographic representation showing the relation between Vaisnavism and Saktism is not uncommon in India as well as in Orissa. The earliest representation so far available of the holy triad of Krishna - Vasudeva - Subhadra (Ekanamsa) and Sankarsana-Balaram is preserved in Karachi Museum, Pakistan (2nd century A.D.).¹⁰ Here two armed Balarama is in standing pose and holding a colossal plough (*hala*) in his right hand. The utter absence of snakehoods above his head is to be noted with great interest. The association of Krsna-Balarama in a few Jaina relief from Mathura Museum and datable to the Kusan period is also worth taking note of.¹¹

It is said that after the death of Baladeva, his dead body was transformed into a stone image which was worshipped by *Devatas* at the door of *Patalapuri* which is identified with Lalitagiri in *Dwapar Yuga*. The area extending from the Bay of Bengal in the east, the Lalitagiri and Assia mountain range in the north-west, river Baitarani in the north and river Mahanadi in the south is called the part of *Patalapuri* (nether world) in the Puranic literature.¹² When *Kali Yuga* appeared and *Buddha Dharma* (Buddhism) spread over



the area, the *Devatas* kept the image of Balabhadra in disguise underwater of the river Madhusagar which is now called the river Gobari. After Gopal Siddha Das discovered the image of Balabhadra near Siddha Sarovar, he worshipped him at Kendrapara. There are some examples which state that Balarama worship was prevalent in other parts of India and even in the heart of Buddhist site like an ancient site of Nalanda. An inscription of king Devapal is engraved on the pedestal of a bronze image of Baladeva discovered from here. So it appears that this Brahmanical deity was worshipped at Nalanda during Devapal's reign.¹³ An interesting carving of Balarama belonging to the 2nd or 3rd century A.D. had been discovered from the Gwalior area at Tumain (ancient Tumbavana). Thus the locality of Gwalior state came under the influence of Vaisnavism in the Saka-Kusan period or the early centuries of the Christian era (i.e. 3rd century A.D).¹⁴

In the 5th-6th century A.D., *Pancharatra* System of the Bhagabata Cult which accept Sankarsana-Baladeva and Krsna - Vasudeva as the supreme deity was followed by the Sarabhapuriya kings of western Orissa.¹⁵ It is a very interesting fact that one inscription on the wall of the Nrusingha temple in the campus of Sri-Jagannatha temple Puri was discovered by late S.N. Rajguru. The said inscription is fixed in the southern wall at a floral-base under the Varaha shrine. It records that in the 37th Srahi of Anangabhima-III (i.e. A.D. 1241), a *Mahamandalika* had donated lands for *Amrta Manohi (Bhoga)* of two Gods, namely Balabhadradeva and Kamalakshadeva (Sri-Krsna). Hence it is to note that Balabhadra *upasana* is given prior importance even in Sri-Mandir, Puri.¹⁶

According to a legend, Kandarasura, a demon king, a destroyer of *yajnas*, was ruling

over the area surrounding Lalitagiri and Assian mountain ranges. *Tulasi Kshetra Mahatmya*¹⁷ reveals that he lived near Lalitagiri -Alatigiri, and was terrifying the local people. Lord Balarama defeated him in a fight as a result of which he left the place went to Kapilash mountain near Dhenkanal and lived in disguise in the nearby mountain ranges as he was an ardent devotee of Lord Siva. Lord Baladeva thoroughly searched every nook and corners of the hill and lastly ploughed the hill with his plough (*hala*) as a result of which one perennial spring emerged from the hill, which is now called '*Langal Siar Jharana*' (spring of the plough). After persuading him from Kapilash, Lord Baladeva killed the wicked demon Kandarasura in a fight and threw his scattered body all over the nearby places.

It is every interesting to note that the present place names centering to Kendrapara are known according to the names of the fallen body parts of the demon king. Such as Asureswar is derived from the fallen cut head (*Asura Sira*) of the demon, Balagandi is derived from the fallen *gandi* (trunk) of the demon (i.e. *Kandara padi*), Kamar Khandi is derived from his fallen *Kamar* (waist). *Navi Khanda Lahakhanda* is derived from his fallen *Navi* (Naval) of the demon. Besides these places, Lord Baladeva founded some 'Siva' temples over the other fallen parts of the demon like Swapneswar Siva temple at Kantia, Lankeswar Siva temple at Gualisingh and Biuleswar Siva temple at Kajala where demon's body parts like feet, neck and waist (part) respectively were fallen. Demon's body (*gandi*) is buried at Balagandi which is proper Kendrapara.¹⁸

Some research scholars have the opinion that Kandarasura who lived near Chandikhol was not a demon but an ardent Buddha *arhat* (follower of Buddhism) and a tantric. He was a leader of a aboriginal race like *Kondha (Kondharasura)*.



According to his name, the place name 'Kandharapara' or 'Kendraparah' has been derived. But other scholars think differently that the name 'Kendraparah' is derived from the word 'Kendra' (one kind of musical instrument made of from the gourd) and 'para' means pada or hamlet of a village.¹⁹ This instrument is played by some sects of people called *Natha Jogi* (Yogi), who lives his livelihood by playing *Kendara* and by moving from door to door for alms.

After the advent of the new Nathism, some sects of people adopted Nathism and called themselves *Natha* or *Natha yogi*. It is worth mentioning here that one ancient stone image of Machhendranatha, one of the chief preacher of Natha cult is worshipped at Rajanagar (Pattamundai). It is understood from an inscription on the body of this image that Natha-cult was prevalent in Kendrapara area during 9th century A.D.²⁰ Descendants of Natha family are now living area of surrounding in Kendraparah at Ichhapur (Kendrapara), Choudakulat, Taradipal (Pattamundai) Chandiapalli (Aul), Nikirai, Kashati, Chandol, Rajanagar, Derabisi etc. and Kendraparah being its *Kendra* (centre) the name derived Kendra-Pada or Kendraparah.

Kandharasura, the destroyer of *Yajnas* was finally killed by Lord Balabhadra. His head was cut for five times but they again appeared which indicates the *Pancha-skandha* of Buddhism i.e. *Rupa, Bedana, Sangya, Sanskar* and *Bijyan*. This legend describes the culture of Buddhism. It is a conflict between Buddhism and Brahmanism. At least the Brahmanism (*Tulasi*) won the battle. Lord Baladeva married Tulasi, the daughter of Kandarasura on the 12th day of the bright-fortnight of the month of *Magha*. This *Magha Sukla Dwadasi* day is observed as '*Tulasi Bihaba*' day (marriage day of Tulasi) with great pomp and ceremony every year.

War of Lord Baladeva with Kandharasura indicates the war of religious understanding. From the early times, worship of Nagas (Snake) was prevalent in Orissa. *Naga Puja* is mingled with Brahmanism. During archaeological excavations at Paharpur in Rajshahi districts of East Bengal (now Bangladesh) shows that one gray sandstone sculpture of Balaram, one of the ten incarnations of Visnu depicted with plough (hala) and under snake-hood.²¹ As this image is dated to the 9th century A.D. It is proved that the Balabhadra Upasana was fully developed from 9th century A.D. in the neighbouring province of Orissa.

In the 13th century A.D., king Anangabhimadeva-III of Ganga dynasty constructed one temple for the worship of Lord Baladeva near the present Kacheri of old Kendrapara town, which is about 60 hands (28 metre) high for the worship of Lord Baladeva Jew in the heart of Tulasi Kshetra.

The original temple was demolished by Khan-i-Dwina (1660-1667 A.D.), the then Subedar of Orissa during the time of Moghal Emperor Aurangzeb.²² He constructed one Masjid on the foundation of the dismantled temple in the year 1663 A.D.

Devotees took the deity in disguise in a boat through the river Govari by boat and kept the deity secretly near Baranga (Chhedara) Jungle. Afterwards it was shifted to Balarampur village near Luna river at Samkhi Bata. So this place is also sacred for Hindus.

The original stone image (*Manibigraha*) of Lord Balabhadra was found from the Tulasi forest by a cow-herd boy named Gopal Siddha Das. According to his name, the name of the presiding deity Lord Baladeva is Siddha Baladeva Jew.

In 1761 the present Baladeva Jew temple was constructed at Ichhapur (Kendrapara) during



the Maratha rule in Orissa. It is constructed by the king of Kujanga, Raja Gopali Sandha and Zamindar (Land lord) of Chhedara *kill*, Sri Srinivas Narendra Mahapatra. One saint *Santha* Gopi Das and Sairatak Giri convinced the then Maratha king of Janoji and constructed the Jagamohan, Bhoga Mandap etc. of the main temple, temple of Gundicha and compound wall. The *viman* and Jagamohan are built in pidha style of temple architecture. Afterwards *Mukti Mandap*, Ananda Bazar, Bhandarghara (store), Gouranga temple, Basudeva temple and Garuda pillar were constructed inside the compound wall. Painting of some Hindu iconography was done on the roof ceiling and inner wall of *Jagamohana*. The entire area surrounding the Baladeva Jew temple is traditionally known as 'Tulasi Kshetra'.

The image of Tulasi Devi was worshipped in a temple near village Gochha on the northern side of the road from Kendrapara to Ichhapur.

The stone image of Lord Balabhadra and wooden idols of Jagannatha, Subhadra and Sudarsana are worshipped according to the rituals of the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri.

Tulasi Kshetra (Kendrapara) is very near to Lalitagiri, Udayagiri and Ratnagiri where famous University of Puspagiri and Buddha Vihar Buddhist flourished since 3rd - 2nd century B.C. So entire deltaic area from Lalitagiri to the river Mahanadi and sea is full of scattered Buddhist antiquity. Important places are Pancha Varahi (Satavaya), Laxmi-varaha (Aul), Chandra Mayuli (Chandan nagar), Rama Chandi (Ramanagar), Patharakani (Barua), Satavauri (Panturi) Maa Kalinaguni (Gangapara-Sanamantia) and Gramadevities.

Zamindar of Chhedara was worshipping one Buddha image in a temple facing north²³ in the deep forest of Baranga (Kendrapada) where the present shrine of Lord Balabhadra and other

deities were worshipped. The same Buddha image is now worshipped inside the compound of Valadeva Jew premises as Basudeva (father of Balarama). The present Tulasi Kshetra and its adjoining areas were once upon a time great centre of Buddhist and Saivite cultures. Some of the Buddhistic and Brahmanical images recovered from here, have been preserved in the Indian Museum at Kolkata.²⁴

Besides Viraja Kshetra and Assia mountain ranges, the upper Baitarani river valley was also influenced by Buddhistic and Saivite cultures. One Siva-Nataraj image was found from Asanapat (Keonjhar) and kept in the State Museum, Bhubaneswar which belong to the 4th century A.D. An inscription is inscribed in the lower portion of the image which describes the devotion of Maharaja Satru Bhanja towards 'Siva'.²⁵ A single copper plate grant was discovered from Deogaon (near Anandapur) Kosaleswar Siva temple. The donor is Sri Ranabhanja Deva of Bhanja king of Khijjinga kotta, who is described as Parameswara which denotes that, he was a devout of Siva.²⁶

There is an ancient well in the campus of Kosaleswar Siva temple at Deogaon which is identical to a well found at the Buddhist site of Udayagiri. An Abalokiteswar (Padmapani) image was also found from here which is of Bhaumakar dynasty period. The Kosaleswar Siva of Deogram (Deogaon) was established by Jajatikeshari during 10th century A.D.²⁷ Hence the area between river Baitarani and Mahanadi were influenced by Buddhism, Saktism, Tantric Buddhism and Saivism side by side in the past.

During the 16th century Sri Chaitanya visited the old temple of Baladeva Jew and remained there for five days. He took new rice (*Nabarna*) at Chhedra.²⁸ As regards the spread of Vaisnavism in that period, we know that the



religious movement was divided into two sects : *Baikhanasa* and *Pancharatra*. The sect of *Baikhanasa* depends on *Vedas*, whereas the other sect *Pancharatra* depends on *Agama* (*Tantra*). According to *Pancharatra* tradition, Lord Visnu has four *Swarupas*. 1. *Para*, 2. *Vyuha*, 3. *Bibhaba* and 4. *Antaryami*.²⁹

1. **Para Swarupa** - Lord Visnu is known as Parambrahma, Parameswar, having six virtues : *Gyana Bala*, *Aiswariya*, *Virya*, *Sakti* and *Teja*. But in some other text it is :³⁰ *Gyana* (Knowledge), *Virya* (heroism) *Aiswariya* (divinity), *Yasas* (fame), *Sri* (Prosperity) and *Vairagya* (renunciation).

2. **Vyuha Swarupa** - Here Lord Visnu has four *Swarupas* like : Vasudeva, Sankarsana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha. Here Vasudeva is believed to have possessed these six attributes as above. So he is regarded as God Himself. Sankarsan has *Gyana* (knowledge) and *Bala* (power) Pradyumna has *Aiswariya* (divinity) and *Virya* (heroism) Aniruddha has *Sakti* and *Teja*.

Here according to *Vyuha Swarupa* - Jagannatha is Vasudeva and Balaram is Sankarasana. New movement of Vaisnavism shows a full development in *Gitagovinda* of Jayadeva in the 12th century A.D. in the soils of Orissa.

So in a very extensive area of the State of Orissa as well as India and abroad, the Lord Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannatha were worshipped in the temple called Baladeva Jew temple. These are some other Baladeva Jew temples in Orissa like Siddha Baladeva Jew of Kendrapara, Sri Baladeva Jew of Jignipur near Salepur, Sri Sri Baladeva Jew of Patapur under Dharmasala (Jajapur), Sri Baladeva Jew of Garadapur (Patakura), Sri Baladeva Jew of Indupur and Kanikagarh (Kendrapara dist.) Sri

Baladeva Jew of Agarpada, Baladeva of Gud village, Sri Sri Baladeva Jew of Manjuri (Ranjit village) in Bhadrak district, Baladeva of Kupari hill (Balasore), Baladeva Jew of Keonjhar, Siddha Balaram of Dhenkanal, Baladeva of Dasapallah (Nayagarh), Sri Balaram of Tumentara (Balipatana) it testifies to the prevalence of extensive Baladeva worship in the deltaic region and its suburb areas of Orissa.

Car Festival of Lord Balabhadra in the Tulasi Kshetra is celebrated on the 2nd day of bright fortnight in the month of *Asadha* just like the festival of Puri. He moves in a magnificent chariot called '*Taladwaja*'. His chariot is 39 feet (12 mts.) in height and 24 feet (7.5 mts.) in diameter having 14 wheels. Two black and two white horses are fitted in front of the chariot. Zamindar of Chhedaragarh was performing all royal duties of Puja like Chherra Pamhara etc. but now it is performed by the successors of Zamindar late Radheshyam Narendra of Kendrapara. *Bhoga* like "*Rasabali*" is famous in Baladeva Jew temple. Besides this, the festival of *Makar Sankranti*, *Mahabishuva Sankranti* (*Pana Sankranti*), *Chandan Jatra* and *Snana Purnima*, *Shravan Purnima* (*Baladeva Janma*) and *Maghasukla Dwadasi* (Tulasi Bibaha) are some of the main festivals observed in the Baladeva Jew temple at Kendrapara with devotion to Lord Baladeva :

"Barsanam Bharata Shresthah

Desanam Utkal Tatha,

Utkale Shrestha Tirthani

Krushnak Parvati Harah.

Yatrayam Halayudha Gachheta

Tulasi Kshetre Tisthatah,

Utkale Pancha Khetrancha

Badanti Muni Punga Bah."

(*Brahma Tantra*)



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The Cult of Lord Jagannath

Balabhadra Ghadai

Puri is the holy seat of Lord Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe "The sanctity of the place exists from pre-historic period where tradition can not reach", remarks Manomohan Ganguly in his book, 'Orissa and Her Remains'. The origin and the antiquity of Jagannath Cult has so far baffled almost all scholars. Anybody studying the Jagannath Cult can easily notice that various castes and creeds, customs and traditions, communities and sects are found to have been assimilated into this cult. Whatever may be the genesis of this cult, it has been admitted both by the scholars as well as persons belonging to different religious traditions that the culture is the center around which in course of time divergent currents and cross-currents have revolved.

Eminent historian Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab has pointed out that Lord Jagannath was originally the embodiment of Buddha. It is known from history that Buddhism had a strong foothold in Orissa from the pre-Christian era. After the conquest of Kalinga by Ashok in 261 B.C., Buddhism must have got an extra impetus under royal patronage. It is known from the Travel Accounts of the famous Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang that Mahayana form of Buddhism flourished in Orissa in the 7th century A.D. The 'Brahman' which is believed to be inside the wooden body of Lord Jagannath is nothing but the tooth of Buddha. Sir Alexander Cunningham advocated the theory that the figures of Jagannath, Subhadra and Balabhadra had been derived from

the Buddhist *Triratna* signifying Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. According to Dr. Mahtab the *Savaras* of Orissa were converted to Buddhism during the reign of Ashoka and worshipped the *Triratna* symbol. Buddha is considered as an *Avatara* of Vishnu. Jagannath is also considered to be an *Avatara* of Vishnu. Gradually Buddhism lost itself in Vaishnavism.

The absence of caste distinction in the temple of Jagannath especially in partaking the *Mahaprasad*, the Car Festival and bathing festival (*Snanayatra*) of the Lord are ascribed to Buddhist influence.

Pandit Nilakantha Das thinks that the three images of Jagannath, Subhadra and Balabhadra represent the Jaina Trinity. Kedarnath Mohapatra and Pandit Binayak Mishra have tried to identify Indradyumna, the legendary propounder of the Jagannath Worship at Puri, with Kharavela, the great Jaina emperor of Kalinga. Sudarsan is the Jaina symbol of *Dharmachakra* and *Kaivalya* (liberation), a term so exclusively common in Jagannath has been derived from Jaina sources. Some scholars regard Jagannath as *Daru Brahma*, godhead manifested in a wooden image. Pandit Nilakantha Das is of the opinion that in the Vedic literature of *Rigveda* (x-81-4) the word 'wood' (*Daru*) is used to indicate the material of which the universe (*Jagat*) is made of. Scholar M.M. Ganguly points out that Buddhism is an off-



shoot of the Hindu religion and the idea of the *Triratna* has been taken from the parent stock.

It is maintained by some scholars that Jagannath, Subhadra and Balabhadra were originally worshipped by the primitive *Savaras*. Oriya texts like *Darubrahma Gita* of Jagannath Das and *Deulatola* of Nilambar Das suggest the tribal origin of the Cult. The *Daitapatis* (custodians of the deity) claim that they are the descendents from the Brahmin Vidyapati through the *Savara* mother Lalita and the deities are left to their sole care during the *Snana Yatra* and the car festival. They also observe the funeral rites of Jagannath during *Nabakalebara*.

Puri, otherwise known as Purusottam Khetra is not only a sacred place for the Vaishnavas but is also equally sacred for the *Saivas*, *Sauras*, *Saktas*, *Ganapatyas* and even for the Buddhists and the Jains. It is interesting to be noted that Jagannath Cult is responsible to combine people of different faiths, castes and creeds under one common bond of unity.

For *Sakta Tantriks* Jagannath is Bhairava and Vimala is Bhairavi. In the month of Asvina, during the Durga Puja, animal sacrifice is made before goddess Vimala which is the only of its kind in the otherwise bloodless rituals performed in the temple. The food offerings made to Jagannath can only be considered *Mahaprasad* after they are re-offered to goddess Vimala.

The propagation of Vaishnavism by Ramanuja in the early part of the 12th century A.D. gave a fresh impetus to Vaishnavism in Orissa. The Ganga monarch Chodaganga Deva seems to have come under the influence of Ramanuja. Chodaganga was a Saiva and but was called as both *Parama Maheswara* and *Parama Vaishnava*. He was also a devotee of Vishnu. The Ganga period witnessed the recognition of Jagannath as the patron deity of the royal family. But the Vaishnavism in Orissa reached its climax in the 16th century. Purusottam Deva, the son and successor of the Suryavamsi

monarch Kapilendra Deva was greatly devoted to Lord Jagannath for singing whose glory he wrote *Abhinava Gitagovindam*. According to *Madalapanji*, Lord Jagannath helped Purusottam Deva to conquer Kanchi and marry Padmavati, the daughter of Saluva Narasimha, the ruler of Kanchi.

Gajapati Prataprudra's reign was marked with the visit of Sri Chaitanya to Puri. Prataprudra became an ardent devotee of Sri Chaitanya and the name of Radha-Krishna was a panacea to his maladies. Sri Chaitanya popularized Radha Krishna Cult through *kirtan* in the nook and corner of Orissa and Jagannath came to be regarded primarily as a Vaishnavite deity. During this period the *Panchasakha*, namely Balaram Das, Jagannath Das, Ananta Das, Achyutananda Das and Yasobanta Das, through their immortal creations popularized Vaishnavism in Orissa. In spite of their individual predilection with *Sunya Yoga* or the Cult of *Bhakti*, these poets sing the songs of Jagannath in one voice and are mainly responsible for making the Cult of Jagannath the mass religion of Orissa.

In 1822 Stirling wrote that the three images of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra respectively represent Vishnu, Siva and Durga. The Jagannath religion in its final phase thus sought to synthesise the three main cults of Hinduisim, viz. Vaishnavism, Saivism and Saktism, but at the same time it also retained some practices of other cults and religions to which it owed its origin.

Thus, the cult of Jagannath is an epitome of divergent religious creeds and schools of philosophy that prevailed in India at different periods of her long cultural history. In the historic process of adjustment, Jagannath has assimilated strange contradictions in a manner that is most amazing in the history of religious thoughts.

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Beshas of the Puri Triad

Sarat Chandra

The Indian Pantheon has many strange deities but none so strange as Lord Jagannath of Puri in the eastern India. An amazing array of rituals and fetes are observed to worship the deity; rituals and fetes which require painting, craftsmanship, artistic use of clothes, floral ornamentation, dancing and singing and histrionics (enacting scenes of mythological and religious significance), and even culinary skills! This makes the God's abode, the spiraling 214 feet high Jagannath temple of Puri, the most important cultural centre of India.

Among the manifold activities of cultural significance, the ritualistic adornments of the deity, known as Beshas occupy a central place. But before providing an account of these fascinating adornments, some background information about Lord Jagannath and his two companion deities may be given.

Not a solitary God but a Triad is being worshipped on the Puri temple pedestal, the Triad consisting of Lord Jagannath, the Principal Deity, and his two companion deities, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra. The names of these idols make it clear that the deities belong to a single-family as described in the great Hindu mythology, the *Mahabharata* (in the magnum opus of Sanskrit origin, Lord Balabhadra is presented as the elder brother of Lord Srikrishna and Devi Subhadra as his younger sister). Viewed in a mythological perspective, Lord Jagannath is none other than Srikrishna, the cowherd boy who

undertook a myriad miraculous feats. But Lord Jagannath of the Puri shrine is also regarded as Lord Buddha, Lord Vishnu and variously by various religious sects.

The shape of Lord Jagannath's idol, and that of his two companions, also is puzzling. Though Lord Jagannath does not have any feet, the God is more than six feet tall ! He appears even taller since the idol is mounted on a stone seat known as *pindi*. And Lord Balabhadra is an inch or two less in height, even diminutive Devi Subhadra's idol is slightly less than five feet high. But what is striking in all the three icons is the shape and the features—the mouth, the nose, and the eyes of the sculpture. All these are remarkably aboriginal in shape and workmanship. Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra have half-made hands. And Devi Subhadra doesn't have any hand at all !

The images of the Triad evidently are tribal in character. But the highly ornate abode of the deities, the everyday and special adornments with which the large size wooden icons are decked with, the incantations with which the worshipping is done, the food offerings which form part of the rituals, the many festivals that glorify the Gods are all classical tradition at the Puri shrine. It has become a billion dollar puzzle that is not yet solved though scholars of international repute have been applying their minds for decades. But a unique aspect of Jagannath cult is evident; the tribal tradition meets here with the non-tribal tradition:



or, in other words, the folk style meets the classical style. And the adornments, whether every-day or special Beshas, are not only interesting but of cultural significance as well.

Though Beshha literally means make-up, the Beshas of Puri temple are multi-media art. The three idols of course are made of wood; but many other objects are also artistically used for the adornment, which display creativity and enhance appeal. These other objects and materials may be enlisted as floral ornaments, clothes, gold and gem-studded ornaments, cane-works, *solapith* (Sponge-like shoots of a watery plants, which are used for artistic crafts), *Zari* (golden coloured foil) works, applique foil works and various wooden statuettes which serve thematic and decorative purposes. Of course, all these are not used in every Beshha: the materials are selected as per the theme as well as tradition.

In fact, tradition plays a pivotal role in the Puri temple activities, and the activities of this shrine are not only innumerable but also amazingly varied. A vast regiment of temple *Sevayats* (those who have been serving the Lord according to tradition) are engaged in these ritualistic activities. From chariot-building to grave digging (yes, there is a time when even the deities die and there is a burial place for them!). For colouring the idols, there is a class of people known as *Pushpalakas* who are the most important persons in decorating the deities. The other temple craftsmen and artists whose services are indispensable for the adornment include the sculptors (*rupakara*), the painters (*chitrakara*), the goldsmiths (*bania*), the tailors (*daraji*) the foil and *solapith* craftsmen (*rangata silpi*) etc. But they all work as per the direction of the *Pushpalaka* whose name literally means "one who decorates with flowers".

Flowers, really, play an important role in several Beshas. Just as there are so many special

Beshas, which are undertaken on specific days during a year, there is also an every-day Beshha of striking beauty known as Bada Singhara Beshha. Flowers are profusely used in this late-night adornment of the Puri Triad.

The reasons offered for this unique aesthetic tradition in the Jagannath cult are many. According to one scholar, Lord Jagannath is also regarded as Vishnu, the Creator Supreme, who loves ornaments and takes many forms. But Jagannath and his companion deities appear crude with the eyes and nose and mouth of the icons lacking finesse. Lord Jagannath's idol like that of Lord Balabhadra's, doesn't have ears or feet and the hands are half-made. This creates enormous possibilities for Beshha or make-up, he maintains.

The real reason for this practice of adornments perhaps is to counter the aboriginal effect of the sculptures by the sophisticated Hindu ornamentation christened as Beshha in the Puri temple tradition. A hallmark of the Jagannath culture, it may be pointed out, is this blending, this union of the tribal and non-tribal, the aboriginal and brahminical. Viewed in this perspective the practice of Beshha appears symbolic.

The many Beshas of Lord Jagannath also reveal his many-faceted personality. The God's regal trait is reflected in the Suna Beshha. The mighty prowess of the deity is driven home in the Kaliya Dalana Beshha, whereas he appears endearing in the Nabanka and Ghodalagi Beshha. If one mentally visualizes the Beshas of Lord Jagannath one after the other, it becomes a fascinating kaleidoscopic vision revealing the deity's many-splendoured personality. It becomes a vision of joy !

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Orissan Temple Architecture

Dr. Soma Chand

Orissa is a land of temples. The concentration of the largest number of temples all over the state has made it a centre of unique attraction for the scholars, indologists, tourists and others.

Out of the five different types of architecture that is - devotional, memorial, civil, military and domestic - we mainly come across the devotional type of architecture in Orissa while others have disappeared with the ravages of time and power.

Temples as free standing structures came to Orissa after the Gupta period through Dakshina Kosala. The Hindu hegemony of Bhaumakaras, Somavamsis and Gangas inspired the Orissan architects to carry on the spirit of creating their own style of architectural temple representations without any Islamic or Persian influence. The period thus ranges from 6th century A.D. to 16th century A.D.

The builders of the Orissan temples gave vent to their feelings on the basis of indigenous canonical texts like *Bhuban Pradip*, *Silpapothe*, *Silpasastra*, *Vastusastra Upanisad*, *Silparatnakara*, *Silpasarini*, *Silpa Prakash*, *Padma Kesara*, *Deula Mapagunagara*, *Bhuban Prabesh*, *Soudhikagama* etc. indicating the standard achieved by our ancestors in the field of temple architecture.

The Indian temples in general are divided into three categories based on their geographical location and peculiar features -

The Northern Indian temples branded as *Nagara* Style of Architecture.

The temples of Deccan belong to the *Vesara* style.

The third category is called *Dravida* Style found in South India.

The Orissan temple architecture ranging from 7th to 13th century A.D. however corresponds to an altogether different category for their unique representations called *Kalingan* Style of temple architecture. Though broadly they come under the Northern style or *Nagara* style, they have certain special features which are unique of their own.

The Orissan temples are of three types -

Khakhara Deula

Rekha Deula

Pidha or *Bhadra Deula*

The *Khakhara Deula* is altogether a different style of architecture closely appearing similar to the Dravidian Gopuram design. The word is derived from *kakharu* (pumpkin, gourd) as the crown looks like a barrel-vaulted elongated roof. The Sakta temples are generally of



Khakhara order. Varahi temple of Chaurasi in Puri district and Gouri temple of Bhubaneswar are two glaring examples of *Khakhara* temple.

Other Saivite and Vaisnavite temples in Orissa represent both *Rekha* and *Pidha* types. In the formative period of Orissan temple architecture there were only two structures of the temples.

The first is original sanctum or *Vimana* or *Bada Deula*.

The second is *Jagamohana* or *Mukhasala*.

The sanctum of the temple is of *Rekha* order which has a curvilinear superstructure. But the *Jagamohana* standing before the main structure is of *Pidha* order. The *Pidhas* form several tiers sitting one upon the other rising to a pinnacle.

With the march of time the Oriya architects began to invent new forms of structure. Thus in big temples we find four structures -

Vimana or *Bada Deula*

Jagamohana or *Mukhasala* or Hall of Audiences.

Nata Mandira or Festive Hall.

Bhoga Mandapa or the Hall of Offerings.

The constructive peculiarities of Orissan temple is marked by uniqueness. The architects perceived the temple in the form of a human male figure or *Purusha*. Like human physical divisions of leg, thigh, waist, chest, neck and head, the temple had similar shapes and structures.

The main temple of Orissa is always of *Rekha* designs with these special features such as -

Pavement or *Talapattana*

Plinth or *Pitha*

Cube or *Bada*

Curvilinear Tower or *Rekha* or *Rathaka*.

Neck or the recess below the *Amalaka Sila* called *Beki*.

Denticulated blockes of stone called *Amalaka Sila*.

Stone cap resembling an unfolded umbrella or *Khapuri*

Finial or *Kalasa*

Trident Discuss on the top.

From the ground *Vimana* rises vertically to a height than is a curvilinear design up to the neck. From the base to the *Gandi* or trunk portion the rise is perpendicular and then the temple slowly inclines inward in a critical manner till the four reclining walls join together at the *Beki* or neck. Above the *Beki* is the portion called *Mastaka* or crown which consists of the *Amlaka*, inverted *Kalasa* and *Dhvaja*. Finally comes the mark of the deity - trident or *trishul* in case of a Siva temple and a discuss or *Chakra* in case of a Vishnu temple. The crown portion is called *Khapuri*. Over the *Ayudha* there may be a flag as auspicious mark. Thus a temple is represented as a *Purusha*.

In a pyramidal *Pidha* type of temple, curvilinear *Vimana* is not there. The *Gandi* or trunk rises from the ground perpendicularly upto a point and then the pyramidal roof is constructed on the four walls that looks much alike the shape of a thatched house from a distance.

Another way is to study the Orissan temple by resorting to vertical division. This is done with the help of vertical segments marked on the *Vimana* of the temple called *Pagas*. The projection at the centre is called *Rahapaga*, on the either side of *Raha* are two *Anurahapagas* and at two corners are two *Konakapagas*. In course of time by gradual evolution *Triratha* plan



of the temple became *Pancharatha*, *Saptaratha* and *Navaratha*.

Another distinctive feature of the Orissan temples is the decorative programme, which is of three types :

Constructive

Representative

Purely ornamental or decorative

These designs are governed by specifications laid down by *Silpasastra*. The vertical projections called *Pagas* are designed as miniature shrines with niches which contain different sculptures to beautify the temple. The canons of architecture classifies soil, stone and temples and contains details of designs and placement of icons, decorative motifs, *Parsvadevatas*, *Dikpatis*, *Astasakhis*, *Naga and Nagini*, *Sardula*, *Ulta-Gaja-Viraja Singha*, *Navagraha*, *Vetal*, *Kirtimukha*, types of scroll like *Phulalata*, *Natilata*, *Patralata*, *Vanalata*, elephant, horse, bull, *Makara* and other animals. After 13th century there was a perceptible decline in the artistic merit of the decorative programmes of Orissan temple architecture.

The antiquity of Orissa is endorsed by her temple architecture which is as sublim as it is

aesthetically innervating. For centuries now, the Orissan golden triangle of Bhubaneswar-Puri-Konark has retained a vintage point on India's pilgrimage circuit for their devotional as well as architectural background.

Lingaraj temple of Bhubaneswar marked the culmination of the evolution of Orissan temple architecture. Exactly a century later started the construction of Jagannath temple with the final product of Orissan architects - that was the temple of Konark.

The Orissan Temple Architecture holds an appeal that is magnetic and almost stupefying in its extravagance and mobility. The dizzying heights of the heavily sculptured towers are as much reasons for wonder as are the exquisitely carved base-reliefs within their numerous halls. From the splendid ruins of Konark to highly sanctified environs of Jagannath and Lingaraj temples, one can get an unforgettable experience of Orissa's art and crafts. They are the symbols of Orissa's cultural heritage that remain an eye-opener even today.

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The Cult of Lord Jagannath

Basanta Kumar Das

Centuries of myths, legends and history are blended into a grand composite culture, which is centered round Jagannath, the Lord of Universe, one of the most revered and ancient of the deities of the Hindu pantheon. The earliest references to Lord Jagannath are found in the *Puranas* and ancient literature though deities of His origin and evolution are still shrouded in mystery.

Legendary sources suggest that Jagannath was originally worshipped by the tribals, the *Savaras*.

The most important evidence of this belief is the existence of a class of *Sevakas* called the *Daitas* who are considered to be of tribal lineage and who still play a major role in various *Seva* to Lord Jagannath in the temple.

In course of time, the cult of Jagannath took an Aryanised form and various major faiths like Saivism, Saktism, Vashnavism, Jainism and Buddhism were assimilated into the concept of Jagannath as an all pervasive and all inclusive philosophy, symbolizing unity in diversity.

Some scholars think that the three main images of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra represent the Jain Trinity of *Samyak Jnana*, *Samyak Charitra* and *Samyak Drusti*. Many other say that the three images represent the

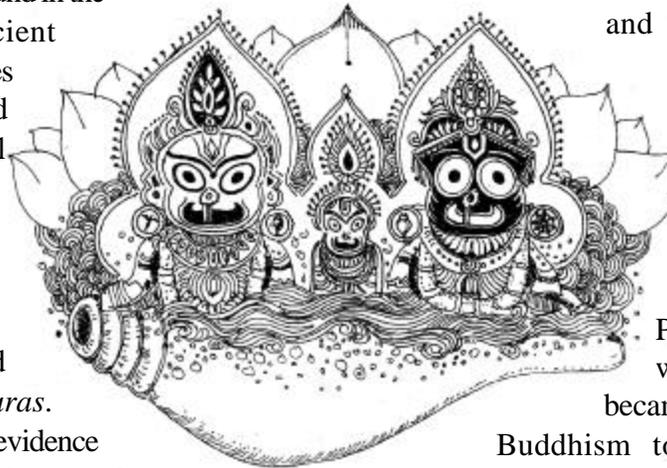
Buddhist triad of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. It is widely

believed that the soul of Jagannath, most secretly hidden within the image of Lord Jagannath, is nothing else than the tooth relic of Lord Buddha. The Philosophy of Tantra which in course of time

became an integral part of Buddhism too has significantly influenced the rites and rituals of the Jagannath temple. But it may be taken as an individual opinion.

The Philosophy of Lord Jagannath, thus defies all definitions and yet comprehensive enough to perceive unity among beliefs, sects and castes.

In other words, in the eve of the Car Festival, He is Lord Jagannath-the *Nath* (master) of *Jagat* (universe). He is a master who does not believe in ruling His Kingdom from his,





Ratnasingasana and wait for His subjects to come to Him. He comes out of his sanctum every year to mingle with his devotees and rule them with His love, affection and benediction. He inspires and enriches the consciousness of all, who are unable to come to Him. Being the Patitapaban i.e. the saviour of the fallen, depressed or oppressed, He purifies them with His *Darsan* and makes them fit to join the mainstream. This splendid occasion of the coming together of the ruler and the subject is popularly known as the "Ratha Yatra" or Car Festival, which is held every year on the 2nd day of the bright fortnight of Asadha.

As the legend goes on, the day Lord Jagannath along with his elder brother Lord Balabhadra and sister Goddess Subhadra, goes to his aunt Gundicha's house, keeping old promise made to her. They return to their divine abode on the 10th day of bright fortnight of Asadha.

The Jagannath Culture from time immemorial preaches the words of love, integrity and peaceful co-existence among the human community. The character of culture is generocity, endurance and co-ordination. No culture or religion is equal to this. Jagannath is worshipped all over the world because He is generous and kind to all. He is looking at great and small, rich

and poor, ruled and ruler, Brahman and Chandal with an equal eye. In this look there is no question of caste, creed or religion. No place of egoism or aristocracy- No place for communalism. Here worshipped and worshipper are equal. Lord symbolises universal love and humanism.

Rituals of Sri Jagannath temple are quite different from the rituals, system of puja or offering performed in other temples. It is an accumulation of many faculties of Hindu religion which synergises here in one platform and rituals are performed. "Arya", "Anarya" and "Brahman" represented by called Aryan *Raja* "Indradyumna", *Savar Srestha* "Biswabasu" and *Brahman* "Bidyapati" are associated with Him. His *seva* and *puja* are traditionally performed by *sevak* called *Gajapati*, *Daitapati* and Brahmin.

Myths, history and legends mingled over centuries and formed a grand composite culture of Lord Jagannath. He is not only the God of the Hindus or the Indians but also the God of the entire humanity, the redeemer of all and His infinite glory is always immutable.

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Dwadas Yatras of Sri Jagannath (Twelve Festivals of the Lord)

Banamali Suar

The temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri, a coastal town near Bay of Bengal popularly known "Mahodadhi", occupies a distinct place in the entire religious world. The word Puri has been derived from Purusottam Puri which is the fundamental and original essence of Hindu philosophy. Both temple and the Lords have deep impact on the social life of people. The social life

of Srikhetra is more or less spiritual and cultural based. Amidst hundreds of rites and rituals and festivals in the Jagannath Temple during the whole year such as Snana Yatra, Hativesha, Anasar, Chakata Bhog, Pana Bhog, Fulurilagi, Osua and Khalilagi, Sandal paste offering, Raja

Prasad, Khali and Khadi prasad ceremony, Netro Utchhaba, Pahandi Bije, Rath Yatra, Sweeping or Chherapahara ceremony. Hera Panchami, Gundicha Rahas, Rath returned festival, Adharpana. Niladri Bije and sleeping Ekadasi, Garuda sleeping Ekadasi, Dakhinayan Bandapana, Chitalagi, Golden Pendant studded with diamond, sapphire, blue gem and blood-stone and emerald, Nrusing Yatra, Jhulan, Birthday of Balabhadra, Sri Sudarsan's four Ashram journeys, Rahurekha ceremony, Birth day ceremony of Sri Krishna, Nanda Utsav, feast of Jungle, plum selling

ceremony, killing ceremony of demons (Asuras) i.e. Baka, Argha, Dhenuka, Pralamba, and Kekesi, Kaliyadalan, Mathurahato, Bastra Haran (stealing of sarees) Debagni, Nikunjilila blind game, Dahalila, killing of Kansa, birth day ceremony of Baban, Indradhwaja Puja, Indra Chandro Govind Elephant puja, Durga Madhab Yatra, gambling, Dasahara, Rajavesha, Weapon



W o r s h i p ,
Radhadamodar veshha.
Hariutthan Ekadasi,
Sarato Rahasa, Dipa
offering, Shradha, Pusa
Abhishek, Makara
and Dhanumuan
Odana, Padmavesha,
Fire ceremony and
Dola Yatra, Ashoka
Astami, Birthday
ceremony of
Nrusingha and Sri

Rama and all his activities and plays from childhood to killing of Ravana, Akhyayatrutia and boating ceremony and marriage of Lord Jagannath with mother Laxmi, only twelve festivals are considered to be most important. Those are observed one after another. Twelve months are fixed for twelve *yatras*. In the month of *Jyestha*, the marriage ceremony of Sri Jagannath takes place on Ekadasi day with Goddess Laxmi who writes a love letter expressing her desire for holy union with Lord. Then begins the ceremony and on fullmoon day, the grand bathing ceremony



starts on Snana Vedi. In Ganesh Vesha, the Lords appear very attractive and Anabasar day begins for fifteen days. In the month of Ashadha - Ratha and Bahuda Yatras are celebrated. This Yatra (festival) is the greatest and most important among all festivals. It attracts pilgrims from all over the world. In Skanda Purana, the festival has been described as Mohavedi Mohoschhaba Yatra. It was the pious wish and order of Supreme God to king Indradyumna to arrange this festival in every year and to drive Him to holy land of Sri Nrusingha. In three chariots namely Taladhwaja for God Balabhadra, Devidalana for Goddess Subhadra and Nandighosa for God Sri Jagannath, all deities are carried. In Devidalana, the Sudarsan wheel designed as a log of wood is seated on Her left side. The movable deities Sri Balaram and Srikrishna in Taladhwaja and Sri Madanmohan dev in Nandighosa are also carried. All sects join in this festival. God Jagannath is Supreme Bramhan and Purusottama. The greatest psychic impact i.e. sense of unity, integrity and brotherhood bind all pilgrims into one entity. The social life and spiritual life become one and same. After Bahuda Yatra, when deities are carried into the Temple in Pahandi, the last door closing ceremony is observed in inner sanction of the main Temple. The door opens by the order of Laxmi after getting satisfactory nine answers from Sri Jagannath. In last answer, the social status and freedom of ladies are recognised by Sri Jagannath.

In the month of Shravan - the Golden Pendants, studded with diamond, sapphire, emerald, blood stone, and blue gem etc. are placed on foreheads of the deities. This is called Chitalagi and the birthday ceremony of Balabhadra is also observed.

In Bhadrava - birthday of Srikrishna is observed. The Yatra begins from birth till killing of Kansa Asura. During the entire period, Nandoatchhab, Kolibika, Kaliyadalan (Defeat of

Blacksnake by Srikrishna), Killing of eight demons (generals of king Kansa), stealing game and Kansa's death etc. are observed for nineteen days. In these rites and rituals, the local inhabitants of ancient streets (*Sahis*) take part directly. They use to hold meetings and decide democratically as to who will act as a demon. One person from each *Sahi* on each appointed day is dressed and decorated as a demon to display his game and *lila* as per custom and tradition. The movable representative deity of Sri Jagannath i.e. Sri Madan Mohan after being permitted by Lord Jagannath takes part in this festival.

In the month of Aswina - Durga puja festival is celebrated for sixteen days. Sri Madhab otherwise known Balapurussottam and Goddess Durga together get united for the entire period and Durgamadhab Rath Yatra is observed for nine days and golden Rajavesha is observed on Dasahara day.

In the month of Kartika a special Bhog called Balabhog is offered and different Veshas and decorations are made. Among those Radhadamodara vesha continues from Dasahara Ekadasi day to next tenth day. After newmoon till full moon on every monday Harihara vesha is observed for deity Sri Balabhadra. Harihara vesha make the Lord half black and half white. Sri Jagannath is decorated and dressed in Laxminarayana vesha which begins from Dasahara Ekadasi day. On twelfth day Baman or Bankachuda vesha, on thirteenth day Tribikram or Dalikia vesha and on fourteenth day Laxmi Nrusingha vesha are performed and celebrated.

In the month of Margasira - Dipa Dana ceremony and Pitrushradha are observed. A tree is artistically erected on the ground in inner sactum below *Ratnasinghasan* with sundried rice. After it is purified, ghee earthen lamps (*dipa*) are placed on different portions of said tree and then other customary rituals follow. The outer part of temple



is also lightened with earthen lamps (*Dipa*) and prayer is offered to Almighty for restoration of peace, security and prosperity of the King and his kingdom. In this month Ghodolagi begins. It means covering of body with clothes to protect from winter.

In the month of Pausa, Pahilibhog ceremony is observed throughout the month. A special cake is prepared out of blackgram wheat flour and cow's ghee. On full moon day, the deities are decorated with Golden Rajavesha and coronation ceremony is also observed. On this day Sri Rama's coronation ceremony was celebrated at Ayodhya in the Ramayana days.

In the month of Magha, Padma vesha and Gajaudharana vesha are performed.

In Falguna the famous Dola festival of the Lords begins. After getting permission, Sri Saraswati, Sri Laxmi, Sri Dolagovind and Madanmohan come to Dolavedi (alter) where the deities play with red colour powder i.e. called *Fagu* or *Abira*.

In the month of Chaitra, the birthday ceremony of Sri Rama is observed. The movable representative deity Sri Rama after getting permission from Sri Jagannath takes part in such rites and rituals. All activities and plays from his childhood till killing of the demon king Ravan are customarily and traditionally observed. In this cultural *yatra*, there comes active participation of local inhabitants.

In Baisakha begins the Chaitra Gundicha *yatra* i.e. Chandan Festival for 42 days. Out of these days, only twentyone days are observed outside the temple in the sacred Narendra Tank. Two decorated boats are used for the boating ceremony. In the first boat, Sri Balaram and Srikrishna and five famous Sivas of Srikhetra such as Jameswar, Lokanath, Markandeswar, Kapalamochan and Nilakantheswar use to sit. In the second boat Sri Madanmohan Dev,

representative of Sri Jagannath alongwith mother Laxmi and Saraswati sits together. After boating of first phase, deities are carried to a small temple inside the Tank. Inside the temple, there is a small sweet scented water tank. Together Sri Madanmohan, Laxmi and Saraswati use to have secret play and enjoyment for some hours. None is permitted to see this bathing ceremony. The doors remain closed under lock and key. Other deities use to take bath in different tanks openly.

On the beginning day of boating ceremony, the Ratha preparation is being permitted by the Lords with performance of rites and rituals. Thus the above twelve festivals are observed for the Lords in twelve months. Harmony and balance have been maintained in all rites and rituals and in all festivals in order to establish a sense of unity among all castes, sects and religious faiths. Lord Jagannath is Purusottama. This has been well narrated in the first line of Bhismadeva's answer to the six questions of Judhisthira as mentioned in *Visnusahasranama*. He has been addressed as *Atmayoni* and *Swayamjata* which mean that Almighty Purusottama has no mother. He himself is the Creator and Destroyer, and Operator as mother. Thus he is both mother and father. He is both thesis and synthesis. The cultural values are unity, uniformity and universality. Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra are inseparable part of Sri Jagannath. That is why He is the main presiding deity recognised and worshipped by all sects, and devotees of all religious faiths. His *Bhoga mahaprasad* is world famous. It has established socialism by derecognising the casteism, colour feeling and creed and special privilege. Nowhere in the religious arena ever exists such culture which is unique and incomparable.

Banamali Suar is an Advocate who lives at Dolamandap Sahi, Puri. He is also a Sevayat in Lord Jagannath Temple, Puri.



The Mathas of Puri

Prafulla Pattnaik

Puri is a unique place where large number of Mathas or religious establishments belonging to different sects are located around the shrine of Lord Jagannath. The Mathas were originally founded with the purpose of imparting education to *Chelas* or disciples and feeding travellers, ascetics and beggars. Gobardhan matha is one of the oldest Mathas in Puri and is believed to have been founded by Adi Sankaracharya in the 9th century A.D. Tradition assigns some mathas like the Vrugu Ashram and the Angira Ashram even to an earlier date. The Vaishnava Mathas belonging to different *Sampradayas* or sub-sects of the cult are numerous at Puri, of which Emar, Dakhinaprasabha and Rathavadas are supposed to be the richest. Prominent among the Goudyamathas are Radhakanta, Gangamata and Kathabhogo, whereas the Oriya, Sisu and few other mathas belong to the local sect of Utkaliya Vaisnavas. The Gobaradhana and the Sankarananda mathas situated near Swargadwar are saiva, and the Kabir chaura matha located in their vicinity belong to the followers of Kabir. There are two matha, viz., Bauli and Mangu which belong to the followers of Nanak. The Mahantas or the heads of these mathas usually pass on responsibilities to one of the chelas or disciples by way of succession, but there are a few mathas like Kothabhola, Kalitilaka and Achari where married Mahantas may hold the office.

Most of the mathas of Puri are connected with the worship of Jagannath and have various *sevas* or duties to perform in the Temple. The Mahantas are the Gurus or spiritual preceptors



of many people. In the past, they received from their wealthy followers liberal gifts of money and endowments in land for the worship of Jagannath and for other charitable purposes. The priests of the temple used to be trained at the Sankaracharya matha and only after obtaining a certificate from the matha were eligible to enter into priesthood and perform worship in the temple. But now this function is being performed by the Muktimandap. Rathavadas matha, besides other duties, arranges special bhogas in the temple during snana Yatra, Car festival, Chandan Yatra, Kumar Purnima, and along with Gopal Tirtha matha supplies the requirements for the Hatibesa of the deities, The



Oriya matha makes arrangement for the pankti bhoga in the Jagamohan during Rakminiharan festival and supplies Kala Sari (black cloth) to goddess Vimala. This matha is also vested with the duty of clearing the Rathnavedi and supplying of canopy and pillows for the Lords. The Record of right compiled under the Puri Shri Jagannath Temple (Administration) Act, 1952, mentions in detail the nities to be performed by certain mathas. Closely connected with the daily nitis and the festivals of Jagannath are the Mathas Jagannathballava, Raghavadas, Sri Ramadas, Emar, Uttarparasva and Oriya.

After their conquest of Orissa in 1803 the British Government took over the management of the temple for some Years and made an attempt to assess the properties of Jagannath including the vast landed properties endowed with the



mathas for the worship of the Lord. Mr.C.Grome, the Collector of Puri furnished a report in 1805 in which he gave an account of lands under the charge of the Mathadharis for the use of Jagannath.

The lands were endowed to the mathas by the donors with the specific purpose of offering some bhogas or performing certain sevas in the Temple of Jagannath or for performing other acts of charity and the Mathantas were mere trustees or marfatars. But being possessed of huge wealth

the Mahantas misutilised these assets. There was much public resentment. Some steps were taken by the British Government to resume endowments of the mathas which were grossly abused, but no tangible result ensured from such half hearted measures as the British Government had committed itself to the policy of not interference in religious matters. After the achievement of Independence the Orissa Hindu Endowments Act,1951, with its subsequent amendments put some effective control over the management of the religious and chartiable trusts. In case of gross mis-management the commissioner of Endowments was empowered to remove the hereditary system of a matha and appoint one or more persons to discharge his functions till the new trust was appointed in accordance with the Provisions of the (Act 1951, Section-35).

However the research scholars have prepared a list of maths available from official records like Gazetteer of Puri District 1929 and from the book "The Cult of Jagannath" written by Dr. K.C.Mishra. So a list of mathas belonging to various sects is furnished here for the ready reference of the readers though the list is not exhaustive.

List of Mathas at Puri

Name of the Mathas	Type, Sect (Sampraday)
Abadhuta Matha	Modern
Arjundas Mathas	Gouda Madhava
Angira Ashram	Angila
Achyuta Matha	Goudiya
Bada Santha	Ramanuj
Bada Matha	Khairata
BadaAkhada	Pancha Ramanandia
Bada Oriya	Ati Badi
Bauli Matha	Nanak Panthi
Balaram Kota	Ramanandi



Bada chhata	-do-	Hati Akhada Matha	Ramandi
Bada Jhadu	Angila	Haridakhandi Matha	-do-
Balagandi Matha	Ramanandi	Jagannath Ballava	Vishnuswami
Baba Bramchachar Matha	Gouda Madhava	Jagannath alias Patipabhan	Vishnuswami
Bali Babaji Matha	-do-	Jayapur Matha	Khairata
Bagha Akkhada	Pancha Ramanandi	Jagata Mohini Matha	Ramanuj
Bada Tarala	Madhwa Gaudeswar	Jatia Babaji Matha	Gouda Madhava
Bankimuhan Matha alias Padmacharan Das Matha	Atibadi	Jena Matha	-do-
Bisakha Matha	Gauda Madhava	Jejeram Matha	Ramandi
Bharati	Adwaita	Jhanjapita	Goudiya
Balbhadra Chhata	Madhwacharya	Jeer Swamy	Ramanuj
Chhauni	Ramandi	Jogada	Modern
Chaulia Matha	Gauda Madhava	Kabir Chaura	Kabirpanthi
Chikti Matha	Nimbarka	Kadali Patuka	Goudiya
Chakrititha Math alias Pandit Matha	Ramanuj	Kadali Patuka	Angila
Sri Ram Das Matha	Ramanuj	Kataki Matha	Ramanuja
Dasvatra Matha	Ramandi	Kanasa Matha	Gouda Madhava
Dampara Matha	Gauda Madhava	Krupa Samudra Math	-do-
Degrri Matha	Angila	Kasusalya Das	Ramanuj
Dukhishyma Baba Matha	Abdhuta	Kunja Matha	Goudya
Emar	Ramanuj	Kothbhoga	-do-
Falahari Matha	Abadhuta	Labanikhia Matha	Angila
Gangamata Matha	Goudiya	Languli Matha	Dasanami
Gandharava Matha	Goudya	Lunia Chowdhury	Goudiya
Gopal Tirth	Adwiata	Mahiprakar	Brahmachar
Gour Kishore Jew Matha	Goudya	Mangu	Nanakapanthi
Goswami Matha	-do-	Malei Matha	Angila
Ghumsar Matha	Ramandi	Mahaprabhujike Baitaka	Ballavakula
Girinaribant Adwata Bramhshara	Adwaita	Mahibiria Matha	Ramanuj
Haladia Matha	Gouda Madhava	Mani Ram Matha alias Kapudia Matha	Ramandi
Haridas Thakur Matha	Goudiya	Nandini Matha	Goudiya
Hati Gorudeva Matha	Ananta Sampradays	Naga Matha	Ramandi
		Narasinghari matha	Ramanuj



Nebal Das Matha	-do-	Samadhi Matha	Ramanju
Narayan Chhata Matha	Goudiya	Sanchhata	-do-
Nirmohi Akhada	Pancha Ramanand	Sanu Jhadu	-do-
Nua Matha	Ramanuj	Stalahari	Ati Badi
Nima Akhada	Pancha Ramanandi	Satasan Giridhari Matha	-do-
Nirbani Akhada	-do-	Sisu Matha	Utkaliya Visanava
Niranjana Chhata	Aghorapatnithi	Siddhu Matha	Ramanuj
Nidhi Das Matha	Gouda Madhava	Sitaram Kota	-do-
Nandi Matha	-do-	Sidhbakula Matha	Goudiya
Omkananath Sitram Das	Gouda Madhava	Sidha Bramchachari Matha	Madhwacharya
Paramanda Das	Goudiya	Suna Goswami	Goudiya
Punjabi Matha	Ramandi	Sundar Das	Pancha Ramandi
Purna Seva Matha	Angila	Siva Tirtha	Adwaita
Pada Matha	-do-	Sanu Oriya Matha	Atibadi
Piplayana alias Papudia Matha	Ramandi	Swargadwar Chhata	Ramanandi
Shri Purustooma math	Goudiya	Surangi Matha	Goudiya
Panjabi Matha	Ramandi	Sana Tarala alias	
Purna Seva Matha	Angil	Radha Kishrna Matha	-do-
Pada Matha	-do-	Sataprakar	Madern
Piplayana alias papudia Matha	Ramandi	Sena Santha	Gaudua Madhava
Shri Purustooma Matha	Goudiya	Trimiali	Ramanuj
Ramakrishna	Modern	Torani Chhatra Matha	Ramandi
Ramaji Matha	Nimbarka	Total Goponath	Goudiya
Radhavallavi	-do-	Uttara Parswa	Ramanuj
Radhakanta	Madhwa Goudeswar	Vania Chhatra	Khairat
Raghav Das	Ramanuj	Venkatchahari	-do-
Ramanuj Kota	-do-	Vruga Ashram	Angila
Ranganikachari	-do-		
Rima Chhatra	Khairata		
Rani Matha	-do-		
Rune Matha	Goudya		
Ramakrishna Matha	Dashnami Sannyasi		
Sankaranandi	Dandi Sannyasi		
Sankaracharya or Bhogobaradhan	-do-		

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Antiquity of the Holy City

Dr. Benudhar Patra



Puri is an important ancient city of Orissa. It is famous in the world for the shrine of Lord Jagannath and has been considered as one of the four sacred *dhamas* of the Hindu religion, the other three are being Badrika, Dwarika and Rameswaram. The *Kapila Samhita*¹ (c.14th century AD) extols Puri as the holiest site in India, and even superior to Banaras from the point of sanctity. The *Kosalananda Kavyam*² of the 17th century AD has described Puri as the city of nectar and ornament of the earth. Admiring the sanctity and holiness of Puri W.W. Hunter³ observed that “known to every hamlet throughout India, and to every civilised nation on earth, as the abode of Jagannath, the Lord of the world..... Here is the national temple whither the people flock to worship from every province of India. Here is the *Swarga-dwara*, the Gate of Heaven, whither thousands of pilgrims come to die, lulled to their last sleep by the rear of the eternal ocean”. In the past, it prospered as a great religious centre and being situated on the coast of the Bay of Bengal (*Mahodadhi*) had commercial importance as well. It has been referred to in the Puranas by various names such as *Nilachala*, *Niladri*, *Purushottama Kshetra*, *Srikshetra*, *Sankhakshetra*, *Purushottama*, *Purushottama Puri* etc. However, most popularly throughout the period it is known as *Purushottama Puri*.

Puri is situated at latitude 19°47'55" North and longitude 85°49'5" East on the shore of the Bay of Bengal. It is well connected both by road and railway. By railway and road it is 63km and 59 km. respectively from Bhubaneswar, the state capital of Orissa. The blue sea gives the town a picturesque appearance. It is a cherished destination for pilgrims as well as tourists throughout the year. Puri has a special significance not only in the map of Orissa but also of India and world. It has some specific features. Here, the temple of Shri Jagannath is known as *Bada Deul* (Big temple), the road in front of His temple is *Bada Danda*, (big road), the daily offering to Him is *Mahaprasad*, His ceremonial *puja* is *Badasinghara* and even the funeral ground at Puri is known as *Swargadwara* (Gateway to Heaven). Puri is the confluence of different creeds and cultures.

We have no concrete evidence regarding the remote antiquity of Puri town. M.M.Ganguly⁴ has remarked that “Puri is the seat of Jagannath, the Lord of the universe ; the sanctity of the place exists from pre-historic period where traditions cannot reach”. In absence of any corroborative data it is, however, difficult to trace the antiquity of Puri to the pre-historic period. The Epics and several *Puranas*⁵ though refer to the name of Purushottama or Jagannath, they do not mention the Jagannath Puri.⁶ Ptolemy (c.2nd CAD) refers



to a place called Nanigaina which has been identified with Puri. The Sirpur Inscription⁷ of Panduvamsi Regent Queen Vasata (c.7th CAD) which begins with an invocation to God Purushottama hardly represents Purushottama of Puri. However, the Vishnudharma⁸ an unpublished Sanskrit work, according to R.C.Hazra⁹ composed between cir.200 AD and 300 AD, furnished very valuable evidences regarding the worship of Purushottama in the Odra country i.e Orissa. The Vishnudharma while enumerating the important centres of Krishna worship states that Krishna was worshipped as Purushottama in the Odra country (*Odre tu Purusottamam*).¹⁰ The Odra country has been identified with northern coastal districts of modern Orissa including Puri, Khurda and Cuttack. The reference to the worship of Purushottama in the Odra country, most likely the Puri region in the *Vishnudharma*, and the fixation of its date of composition by R.C.Hazra would suggest that prior to the 3rd century A.D. there was Purushottama worship in the Odra country.

Hiuen Tsang,¹¹ the Chinese pilgrim who visited Orissa in Cir. 638-39 A.D though does not mention anything regarding Purushottama Jagannath, he has referred to a flourishing port-town called *Che-li-ta-lo* on the south-east of *Wu-Tu* or Odra country near the shore of the ocean which was “a throughfare and resting place for sea-going traders and strangers from distant lands.” A. Cunningham¹² has identified the *Che-li-ta-lo* of Hiuen Tsang with “the present town of Puri or “the city”, near which stands the famous temple of Jagannath. With reference to Hiuen Tsang’s five monasteries’ Cunningham has also presumed that of the five contiguous *stupas* with towers and pavilions of great height, one is now dedicated to Jagannath. But after the identification of *Che-li-ta-lo* with by Manikpatna, the recently excavated the view of Cunningham

seems to be untenable.¹³ It, however, does not mean that by the time of Hiuen Tsang’s visit Jagannath worship was not there at Puri.

D.K.Ganguly¹⁴ observed that in the seventh century AD Puri was a stronghold of the *Vajrayana* sect of Buddhism.” Indrabhuti (c.8th CAD) in his work *Jnanasiddhi*¹⁵ mentions Jagannath as the manifestation of the Buddha who could be none other than Jagannath of Puri. It appears that during 8th/9th century AD owing to the Bhaumakara supremacy who were the great patrons of Buddhism, Buddhism occupied some importance at Puri. According to tradition, Sankaracharya (c.778-820 AD), the exponent of the *Advaita* philosophy visited Puri in the early part of the 9th century AD where he established one of his four *Pithas* called *Bhogavardhana* or Gobardhana Matha. This indicates the importance of Puri as a centre of Hindu Pilgrimage before the 9th century AD. K.N.Mahapatra¹⁶ has rightly pointed out, how Sankaracharya by his vast learning and irrefutable arguments defeated the Buddhist Pandits of Puri and converted most of them to his own faith and proclaimed Jagannath Buddha as identical with the great Brahmanical God Purushottama of the *Gita*. This gradually led to the assimilation of Buddhism with that of the cult of Jagannath.

The *Rudra Yamala*¹⁷ and the *Tantra Yamala*¹⁸ of cir.10th century AD have referred to Jagannath as the famous deity of Utkal (another ancient name of Orissa). Murari Mishra¹⁹ (c.850AD) in his *Anargharaghava Natakam* refers to God Purushottama on the sea-shore. H.Von Stietencron²⁰ analysing some data has stated that a temple of Jagannath existed at Puri in the 11th century AD. In his opinion Yajati-I, the Somavamsi king began the construction of the Jagannath temple at Puri but left it incomplete, and later on Chodaganga Deva, the great Ganga



king undertook the work and brought it to completion. This view at present, however, though completely is not ruled out, still cannot be accepted *in toto*. Ramanuja, the great Vaishnavite teacher and exponent of the Visisthadvaita school visited Puri in the early part of the 12th century AD, and so much influenced Chodaganga Deva who was primarily a Saiva and called himself *Param-Maheswara* that the Ganga king not only accepted Vaishnavism and he called himself *Parama Vaishnava* but also started the construction of Shri Jagannath Temple at Puri. The existence of the famous Ramanuja Math and Emar Math at Puri are reminiscent of the visit of Ramanuja to Puri. The Oriya inscriptions of the 15th century AD have referred to Puri as *Purushottama Kataka*.²¹

The Ain-I-Akbari²² describes Puri as the city of Purushottama. Regarding the foundation of this holy city Ain-I-Akbari mentions :

“Over four thousand years ago Rajah Indradaman (Indradyumna) ruler of the Nilgiri hills sent a learned Brahman to select a suitable spot for the building of a city. He wandered much in search of his object and found a fitting site which he preferred to all other places. On a sudden he beheld a crow plunge into the water and after bath, paying its devotions to the sea. He was astonished at this action and as he understood the language of animals, he inquired of the crow the reason of its proceeding. He received this answer. “I was one of the number of the deotas and through the curse of an ascetic was transformed into this shape. A spiritual guide of high illumination affirms that the supreme creator has a special regard for this spot and whosoever dwells here and applies his soul to the worship of God, quickly attains his desire. For some years past I have supplicated for my deliverance in this manner and the time is now at hand when my

prayer will be answered. Since thou art essentially meritorious, watch in expectation and comprehend the wonders of this land.” The Brahman in a short time witnessed with his own eyes the things he had heard. He apprised the Rajah of these occurrences, who built a large city and appointed a special place of worship It became a place of devotion to high and low.

This observation of Abul Fazal, however, is ambiguous. So far, there is no substantial data to corroborate his expression about the existence of Raja Indradyumna four thousand years ago. But we can agree with the author of Ain-i-Akbari in one respect that at different stages of history Puri was otherwise known as Purushottama. Even today people of old generations call it *Purastam* which is a corruption of Purushottama. The people of other parts of India generally understand Puri as the Jagannath Dham. To the Europeans, the city as well as its deity was known from an early date as Juggernaut. It seems that after the British conquest of Orissa, the town sometimes was called Jagannath *Pooree* which with the march of time gradually became popular as *Pooree* or *Puri*.²³

To sum up, we can say that Puri prospered as an important urban centre only after the construction of Shri Jagannath Temple by Chodaganga Deva (AD1078-1147), the founder of the Ganga dynasty in Orissa. In the 12th century AD. Anangabhima Deva III, the great grandson of Chodaganga Deva raised the status of Purushottama Kshetra, Puri to one of the great *Tirthas* in India. He introduced thirty-six categories of attendants (*Chhatisaniyoga*) in the Jagannath temple which ultimately led to the development of a large number of settlements in and around Puri giving it a flourishing urban status. From archaeological evidences, it seems that prior to Jagannath worship, Puri was a centre of both Saivism and Shaktism.²⁴ The above analysis



shows that Puri was an important urban centre of ancient Orissa, although it flourished tremendously only after the construction of the grand temple of Shri Jagannath.

Notes and References :

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3. W.W.Hunter, "Jagannath" in : N.K.Sahu (ed.) *History of Orissa*, Vol.-I, Calcutta, 1956, p.4 and 5.
4. M.M.Ganguly, *Orissa and Her Remains*, Calcutta 1912, p.398.
5. The *Mahabharata* (*Anusasana Parva*, 135.12) mentions Jagannath in connection with thousand names of Vishnu. *Vanaparva* (Chapter 114, *Slokas* 22-24) of the *Mahabharata* refers to a sacred altar (vedi) on the sea coast between Baitarani river and Mahendra mountain where Yudhistir offered oblations. Scholars like M.M. Ganguly (op.cit.p.399) have tried to identify this *vedi* of the *Mahabharata* with the raised platform of the temple where Jagannath is enshrined. This identification of M.M.Ganguly, however, is highly untenable. In the *Ramayana* (*Uttarakhanda* 108.29) the family of Ikshvaku is called Jagannath. In the *Vishnu Purana* (v.33.41) Krishna has been referred to both as Purushottama and Jagannath. In the *Bhagavat Gita* (xv.18) Sri Krishna declares that he is celebrated in the world as *Purushottama*.
6. R.C.Majumdar, *The Classical Accounts of India*, Calcutta, 1981 p.367; A.K.Pattanayak & B.Patra, "Maritime Trade of Kalinga - A study based on the Foreign Accounts" in : *Proceedings Volume* (XIX) of *South Indian History Congress*, 1999, p.369.
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18. Ibid, p-12
19. Ibid, pp. 9-10 : K.C.Mishra, *The Cult of Jagannath*, Calcutta, 1971, pp.35 ff.
20. H.Von Stietencorn, "The Advent of Vaishnavism in Orissa: An Outline of its History according to Archaeological and Epigraphical Sources from the Gupta Period upto 1135 AD" in : A. Eschmann et al (eds). *The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Traditions of Orissa*, New Delhi, 1978, pp.1-30.
21. N.Senapati, *op cit*, p.772.
22. H.S.Jarrett (trans.) *The Ain-I-Akbari* by Abul Fazl Allami, vol.III, Delhi, (First Reprint), 1989, pp.139 & 140.
23. D.K.Ganguly : (op cit, p.35) says that, the name 'Puri' means 'city' and it does not seem to have been in use before the British occupation of Orissa, it is supposed to be an abbreviation of 'Jagannath Puri' i.e. "the city of Jagannath."
24. K.S.Behera, *op cit*, p.20.

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The Cult of the All-Merciful Lord

Durgamadhab Dash

Puri is the abode of Lord Jagannath. It is adored as one of the four pilgrim centres in Hindu religion. It is known as *Punya Dham* in the Jagannath cult. There is a belief among the Hindus that when one dies at Puri, one has a straight march from this place to heaven and the *Jivatma* attains *Mokhya*, emancipated from the bondage of life after death. In the holy scriptures of *Sanatana Dharma*, Puri is also described as *Neelachal Dham* and *Niladri Purusottam Khestra*. It is also known as Sri Khestra, the abode of Mahalaxmi, the consort of Lord Vishnu. Puri thus boasts for its highly rich spiritual history and cultural heritage.

Sri Jagannath temple is hailed as a gigantic religious organisation. It is the centre of myriad spiritual doctrines and diverse religious faiths. The presiding Deities of the temple - the Jagannath, the Balabhadra and the Subhadra - are worshipped in several ways in different religious ideals. The spiritual surrounding of the temple is enriched with many other peripheral deities. All of them are religiously linked with the spiritual Triad. The peripheral deities are separately worshipped in a spirit of ideological reverence. They have their own *Nitis* and customary rituals.

Many religious festivals are celebrated in the temple on different auspicious occasions along with varied rituals and conventional sacraments. The servitors of the temple do *Havan*, recite the

Vedas, worship the Sun-god and the Fire-god and perform such other religious practices as the pre-requisite ancillaries of the regular *Nitis* of the religious Triad. All these practices are the routine disciplines of the temple. All these are known as common place traditional followings of multitudes of Hindu devotees who visit the Temple of Lord Jagannath urged by the mystic longing of their ever groaping hearts.

Srikhebhtra is further adored as the seat of Vaishnavism. Chaitanya Mahaprabu, the messiah of the fallen humanity, visited this place and embellished Vaishnavism in a more glorious form. The Lord is worshipped in the Vaishnav cult as *Purusottama* in the line of myriad theological expositions in *Sankhya* Philosophy. In literal sense, Lord Jagannath is known as *Purusottama* as He is the Supreme Lord being the combination and culmination all gods, all faiths and all doctrines in the Hindu pantheon. This is the central theme of the Jagannath cult.

The mystery of the Triad has varied significance in the context of its far reaching ideology and metaphysical convictions. In the opinion of spiritual preachers, the Triad represents the philosophy of *Jnana Yoga*, *Karma Yoga* and *Bhakti Yoga*. Balabhadra is said to be the replica of *Jnana Yoga*; Subhadra is said to be the manifestation of *Karma Yoga* and Jagannath the



Supreme Master of *Bhakti Yoga*. We worship the three images for the harmonious uplift of the *Jivatma* to the level of the *Brahman*, by simultaneously following all the three *Yogas* in spiritual practice. Practice of one *Yoga* with the abandonment of the other two is not conducive to the elevation of the *Jivatma* to salvation in life.

In the opinion of Sarala Das, the three deities - Balabhadra, Subhadra Jagannath and are embodiments of Hara, Brahma and Hari respectively. In *Jagannath Charitamruta* by Dibakar Das, Jagannath is portrayed as *Shree Bija*, Subhadra as *Hling Bija* and Jagannath as *Kling Bija*.

The three Lords also exemplify the inhabitants of the world who are mostly having three varied complexions. In this respect, the three idols are the marks of unity and solidarity among the mankind as a whole. The colour of Jagannath being black, He represents the dark skinned inhabitants of Africa and Asia. As Patitapaban, He stands for the downtrodden in these areas. Balabhadra is white in colour. He represents the white skinned inhabitants of Europe. Subhadra, being yellow in colour, represents the inhabitants of China, Tibet and the Red Indians of America.

In *Durga Saptasati*, the Triad have a *Tantrika* eulogization. According to Tantrik devotees, Balabhadra is none other than Saraswati, the Goddess of Knowledge. Subhadra is worshipped as the divine expression of Mahalaxmi, the Goddess of Wealth. Jagannath is the divine expression of Lord Vishnu, the creator and preserver of the Universe. Not only this. The Tantrik devotees also worship Balabhadra as Ugratara, Subhadra as Bhubaneswari and Jagannath as Dakshinakali.

When Sankaracharya visited Puri and went to the Jagannath Temple, he worshipped Balabhadra as Kamapala, Subhadra as Yogamaya

and Jagannath as Lord Vishnu. He asserted in a spiritual statement that Subhadra as *Mayashakti* is installed between Balabhadra and Jagannath to unify *Sivashakti* and *Vishnushakti* as a spectacular divine force. This signified the truth that Siva is no different from Vishnu. Sankara's spiritual averment on the subject pacified many conflicting speculations of the Saivites and the Vaishnavites of his time. The Saivites, the Vaishnavites and the *Saktas* saw in the sacred forms of Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath one divine combination. This again is the wonderful empiricism of the Jagannath Cult.

Jagannath is thus the One Supreme Spiritual Force in the diverse religious forms of the Hindu pantheon. Yosabanta Das, in his *Premabhakti Brahma Gita*, portrayed *Nilachal Dham* as the sacred confluence of all the holy places of the world. Yosabanta Das affirms in this spiritual treatise that a devotee can have religious benefits of Gokula, Mathura, Vrindaban, Dwarika, Kashi and all other holy places in Neelachal Puri. In his *Sunya Samhita*, Achutananda Das has said that all the ten incarnations of the Lord have emanated from *Darubrahma* Jagannath and all the incarnations are also merged in this resplendent self. The Vaishnavites of Utkal say that Jagannath in *Daru* form is none other than Lord Krishna. In *Jagannath Charitamrita*, Jagannath is not only described as the Supreme Lord; He is also eulogized as *Purna Brahma* adorned with the sixteen forms of the Divine Glory.

Pandit Nilakantha Das writes that all gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon have found place in the premises of Jagannath Temple. All the deities of the Temple are known by the spiritual presence of Lord Jagannath. The Lord in this way has overwhelmed all gods; He is overwhelmed by none. Thus the Lord is Himself in every peripheral deity of the Temple. By worshipping the Lord in temple, we worship all gods of the



Hindu Pantheon. Lord Jagannath is not simply the Lord of the Indians or the Hindus alone. He is the Lord of the suffering humanity as the deliverer and redeemer of the entire human civilization. The Temple is said to be the *Vaikuntha* where the religious Triad are worshipped as the symbols of equality, fraternity and the progress of mankind.

In the eclectic system of idolatry veneration, Jagannath is never worshipped as a sectarian deity. The Triad has its own philosophy which is all embracing of all other religions of the world like Buddhism and Jainism. Buddhists believe the Lord as the manifestation of the Buddha. "*Jnana Siddhi*", a Buddhist scripture, describes Lord Jagannath as the Jagannath Buddha. Its author, Indrabhuti, the king of Sambala and the founder of *Vajrayana* System of Buddhism, eulogises the Lord as the indweller of all beings on this earth. The universe, the author says, is *Sarva Budhamayam*. According to other scholars of Buddhism, Puri was an ancient seat of Buddhism. They have said at length that Puri, at one point of time, was known as Dantapura and the Tooth Relic of Buddha was worshipped in a temple at this place. The sacred relic was at a later period surreptitiously transported to Srilanka. Even today, the said relic is worshipped in pomp and ceremony in Srilanka. According to an English scholar, the figures of the Jagannath Triad are derived from the Buddhist symbol of the Triple - Gem, signified as Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Not only this. Buddha was also considered as the *Avatar* of Lord Vishnu. Thus, there was considerable affinity between Jagannath Dharma and Buddhism and, as time rolled on, Buddhism was merged in Vaishnavism and the Buddha was reflected in the Jagannath Triad and worshipped by Hindus as an *Avatar* of the Supreme Lord.

Jainism is also reflected in the Jagannath Cult. The images of the Jagannath Triad are associated with concept of the Trinity, as divinely

conceived by the Jains. The Trinity of the Jains consisted of *Samyak Jnana*, *Samyak Charitra* and *Samyak Drusti* of life. There is a popular argument among the scholars of Jainism, that the *Triratna* concept of Jainism is spiritually akin to the monosyllable symbol of OM which is the combination of the ethereal letters of A U & MA representing the unique expression of the *Satwa*, *Rajah* and *Tama* forms of life in the cosmic creation. Pandit Nilakantha Das remarked that Nilamadhav of the Jagannath legends was none other than the famous Kalinga Jina, a symbol of cosmic omnipresence imbued with the creative energy of the spiritual universe. The Jagannath Triad have thus evolved from the esoteric analysis of Kalinga Jina which was at a later period merged in the Jagannath Dharma.

Thus in the process of spiritual evolution, the Cult of Jagannath has been formulated as a unique esoteric assimilation of several historic forces which conveyed to its devotees a form of religious worship where the Lord is venerated as *Daru Brahma Purusa*, the One who has neither hands nor legs and yet He is omnipotent and omnipresent; the One who has no eyes but sees everything, no ears but hears everything and the One, though unknowable knows everything in this universe. This concept of the Lord conforms to the description of *Purusa* as contemplated in the *Kaivalya Upanishad*. The *Daru* manifestation of the Lords as we see them on the *Ratnavedi*, have no distinct forms. This depicts the *Purusa Tatwa* of the *Brahman* and His all-embracing divine attribute.

In the *Purusottama Mahatmya* of the *Skanda Purana*, there is mention of *Daru Brahma Jagannath* in four manifested forms. Besides Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath, there is another image known as Sudarshana added to this divine assembly. Sudarshana is installed on the *Ratnavedi* on the left side of Lord



Jagannath in the form of a meaningful staff. Sudarshana is described in the *Puranas* as the divine disc of Lord Vishnu. According to Vaishnavites, the Lord holds this cosmic missile in the second finger of His right-hand and uses it, when necessary, to annihilate the demonic forces on the earth.

In the eleventh chapter of *Matsya Purana*, it is said that the evolution of Sudarshana has a religious background. One day the Sun-god approached Lord Vishnu and prayed to Him for shrinking his resplendent energy. Lord Vishnu, pleased with his prayer, shed a portion of his cosmic energy and apportioned it into three fractions. With one fraction, he created *Sudarshana Chakra* and placed it on the second finger of His right-hand. With the other two fractions, He created *Trishula* (trident) for Lord Siva, and *Vajra*, the weapon of thunderbolt for Lord Indra. This is how Sudarshana was evolved as a divine weapon of Lord Vishnu.

In the *Brahma Purana*, there is a different description. In the nineteenth chapter of the *Brahma Purana*, it is said that when Lord Vishnu needed a distinctive and unequalled weapon to annihilate the demonic forces on the earth, He appealed to the *Devas* to mediate in His divine mission. The *Devas*, realising the implication of the Lord's mission, parted with portions of their divine energy and created the disc of Sudarshana for use by Lord Vishnu in His sacred mission.

Sudarshana is thus described in the Hindu scriptures as a unique weapon streaked with matchless divine energy of countless suns. It is believed that, worshipped with unflinching devotion, Sudarshana can lead a devotee to divine salvation.

A question arises, if Sudarshana is the divine disc of the Lord, why is it not worshipped in its circular form on the right-hand of Lord

Jagannath ? Why is it installed on the left side of the Lord in a staff-like form ? This has been well explained in a symbolic manner in *Tapaswi Hanuman* by Pandit Sadasiva Rathasarma. The illustration given here runs like this.

Sudarshana is personified in this scripture as a god, and the close acolyte of Lord Jagannath. As the narrative goes, one day Sudarshana thought that He was invincible in the cosmic creation of the Lord. But for him, the Lord could not have done anything in His divine mission. This was too much of an abrasive pride. The Lord tolerates everything but not one's pride or ego. Sudarshana, the Lord thought, was going the wrong way. So He decided to teach him a lesson. He contrived a special plan whereby his pride could be vanquished. He called Sudarshana to His side and said, Sudarshana I want Hanuman's presence right now in the Temple. He is presently engaged in meditation in *Abhayaranya* (deep forest) far away from this place. You please go and inform him to meet Me immediately. Sudarshana, wasting no time, arrived at the place where Hanuman was engaged in meditation. He conveyed the message of the Lord to Hanuman and left the place. Hanuman in meditation could come to know the purpose of Sudarshana's mission. He too wasted no time and rushed to the Temple. After sometime, he reached the main entrance of the Temple. To his surprise, he found that all the gates of the Temple had been blocked by Sudarshana. Dazzling discs were found revolving at the entrance of every gate. Probably, Sudarshan wanted Hanuman to fight with him so that he could crush the latter and display his strength before the Lord. Hanuman could know everything by closing his eyes. He prayed to the Lord seeking His mercy to cross over the obstacles. With the blessings of the Lord, Hanuman now assumed his colossal divine form, blessed with eight hands. With four hands, he



captured the four revolving discs putting those under his armpits. With two hands folded, he paid obeisance to the Lords on the *Ratnavedi*. With the remaining two hands, he did *Kirtan* singing the glory of the Lord's name and moved forward towards *Ratnavedi*. When he reached the Lord, he released the four forms of Sudarshana from his armpits and prostrated before the Supreme Self. By then, Sudarshana had already known the Lord's reaction to his pride. With folded hands, he begged for atonement of his sin. Nevertheless, the Lord ruled that, Sudarshana for his sin, would lose his disc form in *Kaliyug* and be seen on the left side of the Lord in a staff-like form. That is why, Sudarshana is seen on the left side of Lord Jagannath in a staff like form on the *Ratnavedi*.

The implication of this religious narrative brings home the fact that the Lord can tolerate everything, even the hard kicks of one's feet onto His celestial body but not one's pride and ego.

In the words of Swami Chidananda Saraswati Maharaj, if one worships Lord

Jagannath, he gets the benefit of worshipping all gods of the Hindu pantheon. Jagannath is the Lord of the humanity. He is not bound by the mundane restrictions of the world. He receives everything that is offered to him in a spirit of love and affection. His *Prasad* is known as *Mahaprasad*. It has the sanctity of impeccability and purity in usual dispensation. It is the symbol of equality and fraternity. It is no offal even if it is shared together irrespective of caste, creed and religion. The Car Festival of the Lord is an all-embracing annual ritual of the Temple. This is in a nut-shell the Cult of Jagannath, the Cult of the All-merciful Lord.

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Jagannath Temples in Mayurbhanj District

Pradeep Kumar Gan

The peculiar wooden images of the Holy Trinity, consisting of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are special contribution of Orissa to the field of Hindu Iconography as such images are not found anywhere in India except the Eastern Region. In Orissa the Jagannath temples are concentrated not only in the plain areas of the old undivided Cuttack, Puri and Balasore districts but also in the hilly tracts of Koraput, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj. The forest clad Mayurbhanj district of Orissa is extremely significant due to the worship of these three images collectively or Jagannath singly.

The Jagannath Temple at Baripada

Baripada is situated on the bank of river Budhabalanga and is the present headquarter of the Mayurbhanj district. There is an old temple, which is popularly known as the temple of Bada Jagannath. It was built by King Baidyanath Bhanja in 1497 *Saka* era corresponding to 1575 A. D. A small inscription in two lines is now found fixed to the upper portion of the right hand boundary wall of the temple indicating the date of construction of this magnificent edifice. This inscription states that the shrine was built in the *Saka* year *Muni* (7) *Randhra* (9) *Abdhi* (4) and *Subhransu* (1) or 1497.

*Sakabde munirandhrabdhisubhransu pramite suve
Bhajanayan Baidyanathena prasadastu kruto muda //*

The main temple and its *Yagamohana* and *natamandira* are all located within a massive compound the floor of which is paved with dressed stone slabs. The temple and *jagamohana* constructed on a high plinth represent *rekha* and *pidha* style of Orissan architecture respectively. On the outer walls of the main temple are noticed the figure of Narasimha, Trivikrama and Varaha worshipped as *parsvadevata*. The door entrance to sanctum is surrounded with figures of Ganesa, Navagraha, Gajalaksmi, Kubera, Bhairava, Ganga, Yamuna, Garuda and Jaina Tirthankaras. Some of them are fixed to the inner walls of the *jagamohana*. This temple is made of laterite stone with ornamental carvings. It is built in the style of Kakharua Baidyanath temple of Mantri. At present all the monuments including the raised compound walls are covered with lime plaster.

Besides the Bada Jagannath temple at Baripada, there is also another important Jagannath temple locally known as Banthia Jagannath temple.

The Jagannath Temple at Haripur

Haripur or Hariharpur is situated ten miles to the south-east of Baripada. It was the capital of the ex-Bhanja rulers of Mayurbhanj before the present town of Baripada was founded. In the



traditional genealogical account it is recorded that Maharaja Harihara Bhanja erected this magnificent township in 1322 *Saka*, corresponding to 1400 A.D. The place was called Hariharpur after his name and the headquarters was shifted there from Khiching. The vast ruins of this place afford interesting materials for historical research. In addition to other ruins and archaeological remains, we found the Radhamohana, Rasikaraya and Jagannath temples here.

The famous Jagannath temple is situated at a distance of 270 feet to the south-east of the Rasikaraya temple and outside the fort area. According to local tradition, Raja Harihara Bhanja, the founder of the capital city constructed this temple. The date of the construction of the Jagannath temple by Raja Harihara Bhanja may tentatively be fixed around 1630 A.D., when he was ruling after the death of Raja Baidyanath Bhanja. This temple displays the *Gaudiya* style of architecture. The artistic decorations on the outer walls of the temple of Jagannath have lost much of their beauty. The temple was very artistically painted in various beautiful colours.

When Haripur was in a flourishing condition, the *Rathayatra* festival of Jagannath and Radhamohana, (the deities most honoured in the capital of the Bhanja Rajas) was celebrated with great pomp and gaiety and Vardhanapur served as the halting place of the idols. When the temple was demolished, the image of Jagannath, which was formerly placed in this temple, was taken to Pratapur, where the idol is worshipped daily.

The Dadhivamana Temple at Pratapur

Pratapapur is situated to the south-east of Baripada. It was formerly called Ramachandrapur after the name of Ramachandra Bhanja Deo, who founded it. According to the

local tradition, Gajapati Prataparudra Deva, the far famed monarch of Orissa travelled through this place of the Bhanja territory on his way of pilgrimage to Brundaban. After the death of Raja Prataparudra Deva, the name of the village was changed to Pratapur in honour of this illustrious *Raja* and it was since then known by that name. There was a temple constructed by the then Bhanja ruler for the worship of the images of Jagannath, Dadhivamana and Sri Chaitanya, but before its completion the iconoclast Kalapahada destroyed it. The images were removed secretly to the fort of Hariharpur in order to be saved from the iconoclast. When Hariharpur was again destroyed on account of Maratha raids, the images were brought back to Pratapur and Maharaja Jadunath Bhanja Deo subsequently had a temple erected there for the worship of Dadhivamana and other images. The temple of Dadhivamana in course of time collapsed and the images are still worshipped in a small hut.

The Purusottama (Jagannath) Temple at Kosali

The village Kosali is situated half a mile east of Badasahi. In this village there are two ruins of early temples, one dedicated to the *Jaina Tirthankara* Parsvanath and another to Purusottama Jagannath. The original Purusottama image, Sudarsana *chakra* and the stone sculptures of the temple have been removed from the site. The site of the Purusottama temple lies to the south-west of the village, but except the remnants of underground stone foundations on a piece of land, no trace whatever of this temple exists at present.

The Jagannath Temple at Ratnapur (Mulapal)

This place is situated on the bank of river Salandi flowing in the Panchpir sub-division of the district. Ruins of the ancient fort belonging to



the *Zamindars* of Ratnapur are traced here. At present there remains a mound surrounded by jungles, probably on the ruins of the old fort. There was a Jagannath temple in the fort of Ratnapur. But when the fort was completely destroyed, images of Jagannath and Durga, the deities of the *Zamindar* family began to be worshipped in Mulapal gada, on the south bank of the river Salandi.

The Gundicha Temple at Brindavanpur

Brindabanpur is situated at a distance of one mile and a half to the north-west of Hariharpur. The tradition says that Raja Brundaban Bhanja founded the village. The Raja erected a beautiful temple here, which he dedicated to his favourite God Brindavan Chandra. There is another temple known as Gundicha temple, which was dedicated to Lord Radhamohana and Lord Jagannath. According to local tradition, Vira Vikramaditya, a monarch of that time built this temple. The Gundicha temple seems to be an imitation of the style of *Gaudiya* architecture of Bengal, which is in complete ruins. When Hariharpur was in a flourishing condition, the Rathayatra festival of Jagannath and Radhamohana was celebrated with great enthusiasm and the Gundicha temple at Brindabanpur served as the halting station of the idols.

The Jagannath Temple at Kaptipada

It is situated on the bank of river Sono, at a distance of 52 km from Baripada and 7 km to the south-west of Udala. It was the capital of the Raja of Kaptipada, which is said to have belonged to the Birata family. Presently it is the headquarter of Kaptipada subdivision. The place is famous for the temples of Lord Jagannath and goddess Kanaka Durga. During the Rathayatra festival the local people assemble together without distinction

of caste, colour and creed and pull the chariot with great enthusiasm.

Today there are many Jagannath temples in the district of Mayurbhanj. The sacred name of Jagannath is invoked on every occasion, in every village home in Orissa. He may be the Lord of the Universe, the highest supreme deity, the Purusottama, to the countless millions of the Hindus, living in India and abroad, but this relationship with Orissa and the Oriyas is almost human and overwhelming. Whatever may be the hypothesis, Lord Jagannath holds a unique place not only in the history of Orissa, but also in the lives of its people. To the millions of the Hindus of Orissa, Jagannath is their nearest kith and kin.

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Puri and the Poet Tagore

Gurukalyan Mahapatra

I have come to Puri. I am the invited guest of those who are now at the helm of the affairs of Orissa. There is something novel in this fact. In older days, they who were kings or heads of the state, use to honour the meritorious, thereby honouring their own countries and governments. By this liberality, they used to keep contact with human culture and admit the universal heritage in the development of faculties. We have learnt the modern system of political administration from the English. The talented have no place in it. The statesmen of Europe wield the outward aspect of that power which is based upon economic and administrative laws. They can not have the right to govern the spirit that lies underneath but it is needless to argue that having acknowledged and paid due regard to it, a noble environment can be created for the government. In oriental system of administration the scope for acknowledgement of the individual talent has, however, not been neglected.'

The poet of the Universe, Kavi Guru Rabindra Nath Tagore once expressed this in a letter to his former Secretary Dr. Amiya Chakravarti. While at Puri Tagore appreciated not only its sea breeze, but also the then Orissa Government's unique hospitality. Hence in the same letter, he mentioned - 'Let me now tell you about myself. I have no work here, nor am I of any use to anybody. Those who are taking care

of me here, expect no material advice from me. That salutary and refreshing effect with which the sea breeze is touching my body and mind is the very symbol of the hospitality of the newly responsible Orissa Government. Administrative procedure has created no obstacle to it, nor has it been affected by budgetary economy. Sitting on the first floor of the Circuit House, I have unhesitatingly given myself upto pure idleness. The ministers here, having noticed the tired condition of my health, come everyday to encourage me to spend my days without any purpose. The mentality of admitting human relationship even in the midst of heavy pressure of work is still inherent in our country; and this has been felt by me specially after I have come over here.'

Tagore loved the people of Orissa as well as appreciated its administration, which is found in the concluding para of his letter. Thus he concludes, 'From a distance I have formed an idea about the love of the people and the efficiency of those who are at the helm of the administration of Orissa at present, and now I am appreciating it from close quarters.'

In 1939, Sri Biswanath Das, the then Chief Minister (called Prime Minister also) of Orissa had invited Rabindra Nath Tagore to visit Orissa. Besides, Chief Minister Das went to Calcutta to



attend a meeting of All India Congress Committee in the same year. During his stay there, he personally met the poet to pay respect. Tagore told him that he was happy to know from the papers about the progress of Orissa under the popular ministry. Tagore referred his connections with Orissa for a century and said, '*I belong also to Orissa. I entertain goodwill, love and affection for the people of Orissa*'

Mr. Biswanath Das requested him to visit Orissa personally to see the progress of Orissa and Tagore agreed to his proposal. After returning to Cuttack (as the Cuttack was old capital of Orissa) Chief Minister Das wrote a letter to the poet on behalf of the government and people of Orissa to visit this province, not as a guest of anybody but as a State Guest. But the then Governor of Orissa (first Governor) Sir John Hubback did not like the idea of making a non-official person a State Guest. But the ministry of Biswanath Das insisted that Tagore should be treated as a State Guest. The then Chief Minister Mr. Das sanctioned the necessary amount of expenditure out of his discretionary fund and asked the Collector of Puri to look after the arrangements.

Poet Tagore then reached Puri on 19th April in 1939. He was received there by the ministers and government officials. The poet stayed in the Circuit House as the guest of the state Government. But all his engagements were cancelled for few days as the poet suffered from slight fever and the doctors advised him complete rest.

At Puri on 8th May, 1939 the poet was given an ovation on behalf of the women of Orissa. The next day i.e. on 9th May, the poets' birth day was also celebrated there with enthusiasm. A function was held in a well decorated pandal after the opening song. The poet was welcomed with the chanting of Vedic hymns by the Pandits of

Sanskrit College. Flower, sandal paste, vermilion and coconuts were offered as a mark of respect.

The then chairman of Puri Municipality a well known writer and the compiler of Oriya Encyclopaedia, Mr. Gopal Chandra Praharaj welcomed the poet and presented him a filigree casket on behalf of various cultural organisations. Pandit Raghunath Mishra also read an address of welcome in Sanskrit. Well known Oriya writer and freedom fighter Mrs. Sarala Devi also welcomed in Oriya. At last the poet expressed his satisfaction and gratitude for the cordial reception which was accorded to him. Prof. Pravat Mukherji writes that *Tagore in his reply to the reception, said that he had been warmly received in many countries of the world, but the reception which was given that day by the people of orissa touched his heart, as it was according to the traditional Hindu style. Tagore also said, 'he would always cherish the memory of that welcome so spontaneously accorded by the people of Orissa.'*

On his birth day, prior to that meeting two Oriya poets met Tagore at the Puri Circuit House and recited poems in Oriya which they addressed to him. They were Kalindi Charan Panigrahi and Chandra Sekhar Das of Jajpur. Panigrahi was a famous writer of Orissa and his poem was appreciated by *Tagore, who observed that there was close affinity between Oriya and Bengali poems.* Das another poet of Jajpur who also met the poet Tagore was blessed. Tagore even wrote a few lines in Bengali for him. The English translation of those lines are -

*O' my unknown admirer,
Today you have become known.
With my blessings I repay
My admirer your loan.*

During his stay at Puri, the Raja or the king of Puri and the Superintendent of Jagannath



temple, bestowed upon the poet Rabindra Nath Tagore, the title *Parama Guru* (the great teacher). As the poet was indisposed that ceremony was not held publicly. The Dewan (Manager) of the king therefore came down to Circuit House in a procession to bestow that title. First of all the panegyric was read out in holy Sanskrit language. Then the camphor garland, head dress and a pair of silk cloths were offered as a mark of respect by the chief priest of the king on his behalf. Tagore in his speech expressed great pleasure for the honour accorded to him.

Though Tagore left Orissa in the second week of May, 1939, while he was at Puri, he had composed three poems. They are (1) *Pravasi* (The outsider) (2) *Janmadin* (The birth day) (3) *Epare Opare* (This side and that side)

In his first poem *Pravasi*, Tagore describes himself as a man of the world and he does not consider anybody to be alien. The theme reveals that he is united with all men of the Universe on a board of intimate relationship. Those who are materialistic and engrossed with worldly affairs, have lost the communion with their souls. They are satisfied to stay within the narrow confines of their own four walls and they have no carving to hold communion with the Universe. The message of the poet was that the curtain of oblivion between the little self and the greater self disappears and we are again united with the universe. This is truth, the entire Universe is our home.

In his poem 'Janmadin' the poet regrets that the people know him only as a poet and never try to know his entity. This narrow vision gives only a divided picture and the deity who lives in the heart of the poet, laughs at this fragmentary narrow conception, writes Prof. P. Mukharjee.

But his (Tagore's) poem 'Epare Opare' was an emotional poem. The poet had a feeling that

he had lost all contacts with the noisy world on the other side of the highway. He lives at a distance of reality in life and looks for life's fundamental meaning. How he fights with lonely mind has been depicted in this poem.

Rabindra Nath Tagore also visited Puri earlier on 12th Feb. 1893. Probably this was his first visit to Puri. At that time he visited Puri alongwith the then District Judge B.L. Gupta and his wife. Gupta was visiting Puri for his inspection work. Sitting over a palanquin, Tagore enjoyed the journey to Puri. By that time he was young. It is also learnt that in 1891 December, Tagore visited his Pandua Estate in old Cuttack district of Orissa on behalf of his father. This perhaps was his first visit to Orissa. However, on 12th February 1893 when Tagore first visited Puri. It was very much enjoyed by him. Thus he narrates his experience in a letter. 'The road lies beyond the Kathjuri (a river of Cuttack city). The white sands are glittering. In English it is called the bed of river. It is bed indeed. It is like a bed abandoned at dawn - a bed of undulating sands, formed by the movement and force of the river currents. This crumpled bed has not been smothered by a hand with care. On the other side of this long stretch of sand at one end and a narrow stream of crystal clear water is flowing. It has been described in Kalidasa's *Meghdoot* (Utara Megh, Sloka 28) that the separated wife of Yaksha was almost lost at the edge of her lonely bed, like the moon of the dark fortnight appearing at its most attenuated stage at the last edge of the east. The sight of this river at the fag end of the rains provides another simile for a pining woman.'

Tagore wrote in this letter, 'the road from Cuttack to Puri is good. It is high with low-lying fields on both sides. There are big shady trees, mostly mango. At this time all the mango trees are in blossom, filling the way with fragrance.



Some villages are seen surrounded by mango, pippal, banyan, coconut and palm trees.

Tagore narrates, at places covered carts are standing on the banks of shallow rivers. There are confectioners under palm-leaf thatches. Inside the huts in rows, under the trees on both sides of the road, the pilgrims are taking their meals. The beggars are shouting in strange languages, whenever they see fresh batches of pilgrims or carriages or palanquins'.

He also wrote about the pilgrims entering to Puri. He wrote, 'as one approaches nearer to Puri, the pilgrims are seen in greater numbers. covered carts are moving in lines. People are found lying down, looking or gossiping together on the banks of tanks. On the right side of the road there is a big spire of the Jagannath temple is seen. Suddenly at one place, crossing the line of trees and bushes, the wide stretch of sandy sea-beach and the azure line of the sea become visible.'

With B.L. Gupta and his wife Tagore paid a courtesy visit, called on the then district Magistrate of Puri, E.H.C. Walsh. But the District Magistrate Walsh was busy and Tagore and Gupta family were informed to meet him next day. But D.M. Walsh and his wife both were sorry subsequently as they came to know that the District Judge and his wife wanted to meet him. Next day Walsh met them and expressed regret. Alongwith Gupta couple, he also invited Tagore to his house. Tagore was reluctant. But Gupta again requested him to accept his invitation as he had apologised. Prof. P. Mukherji writes that *Tagore in a letter had referred to that incident and blamed the habit of Indians to wait at the doors of the Europeans either to flatter or to seek jobs.* The next day, Tagore was received by the D.M. of Puri, Mr. Walsh. Both of them sang songs. From Puri Tagore alongwith his

nephew Balendranath came to Bhubaneswar and visited Khandagiri caves and the temples of Bhubaneswar.

When Tagore was staying in Orissa, he had taken a plot of land on lease at Puri from the Board of Revenue. But the State Government wanted to take back that plot of land from him. The then Collector of Puri A. Garrett had written a letter to Tagore about this. Unfortunately the date of the letter is missing. But Garrett thrice officiated as the Collector of Puri from 1900 to 1902. This was the copy of that letter.

To

Babu Rabindranath Tagore,

I am to inform you that the Board of Revenue have made allocation of sites in the Balukhand Government estate, Puri, for European and Native quarters and that separate places drawn out distinguish one from other. The site you have in the estate consequently falls in the European quarters. So the Board desire to take it back from you, giving you, equally good site in exchange in the Native quarters. An early reply is solicited.

Yours truly
A. Garrett
Collector

Rabindranath Tagore, the 'Gurudev' as Gandhiji used to call him, though a Bengali, was closely associated with Orissa like that of Netaji in many ways. Both Tagore and Netaji had house in Cuttack city.

Former Chief Minister and well known writer Harekrushna Mahtab also came in contact with Tagore. He loved and respected both Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore and once wrote 'both Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindra Nath represent an age which seems to have gone.



Both these saints have passed into that limitless age in which Vyasa, Valmiki and a host of others lived and flourished Gandhiji and Rabindranath may today be appearing as having receded to the remote past, but they have provided the background for the working out of India's destiny. The knowledge which science bestows now on man is bound to require some controlling force so that he may not go astray. That force has to be sought from the teachings of Rabindranath and Gandhiji.

Dr. Mahtab met Tagore at Puri but describes his (Tagore's) Puri visit in a different way. He wrote in his autobiography 'Sadhanar Pathe (The austere way of life) that the then Congress Government of Orissa invited Tagore as the State guest to Puri for more than a month. Tagore was also felicitated there at Puri. A special train was arranged for the students of Orissa to meet Tagore. But those who were on strike never had allowed the students to meet the poet. Mahtab writes, he (Mahtab) told them that they would repent in future as they could not meet the poet.

Tagore was invited to Puri as the State Guest, prior to that he was invited to Egypt as the State Guest. Nowhereelse he was invited as the State Guest, says Dr. Mahtab in his autobiography. He also mentions that Tagore was quite delighted while he was in Puri but when he came to know the behaviour of some students, he (Tagore) remarked 'a fruit is going to ripe, allow sometime for this and do not detach the fruit from the tree before its maturity.'

Rabindra Nath Tagore was born on 7th May in 1861. He was the fourteenth and youngest

son of Maharsi Debendranath Tagore. He received prestigious Nobel Prize for his literary masterpiece 'Geetanjali' (a collection of devotional songs) in 1913. Two modern Oriya poets one Bhaktakabi Madhu Sudan Rao and another Katakabi Laksmikanta Mohapatra were inspired by Tagore and wrote two similar books Kusumanjali and Jiban Sangeeta respectively, which are rare creations in Oriya literature. For a stint Tagore was the State guest at Puri. He had come to Puri earlier as evident from his letters. All these events are interesting and important from historical point of view and I am avid for more information on this.

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Om: The Eternal Tune

Saroj Kumar Panda

The expression "om" is not found either in the Rig Vedic hymns or in the Atharva Veda. It is found in the later Vedic literature, such as in the Brahmanas. Still its application in the Brahmanas indicates that it is very artificial and not natural. The first use of this significant word "om" is found in the Aitareya Brahman on which it is declared that om is the world of heaven and the sun. It is resolved into three letters a, u and m. These letters in turn are derived from the three Vyahrtis-Bhuh, Bhuvah and Svar; these from the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda and Sama veda; these from the gods-Agni, Vayu and Aditya and these from earth, atmosphere and air.

The philosophical meaning of om is like this. It has been said that, "a" is waking state of soul (Atman). "u" is sleeping state (Swapna) and "m" is the state of deep sleep (Sushupti). Om, the synthesis of all these three letters is the symbol of the soul (Atman). Here these three sounds may not be om, but their collective sound may be Om. In Bhagavata Gita, Lord Krishna has described himself as "Om". The first verse of Mandukya Upanishada interprets "Om" as the symbol of the total universe. In many other places in the

Upanishads, it has been said that "Om" is Akshya Brahma (Eternal or Unchanging entity). If you know om, you will get Brahmaloaka (highest heaven).

In the Upanishads it has also been said to the disciples that one meditating upon om will get various states of existence and at the end, he will go beyond darkness and will see the rays of light, hope and aspiration. It is believed that meditating upon om, one should unite individual soul (atman) with universal soul (Parama Brahma).



This "om" is still used in Oriya Prakrit and Oriya alone. Here it is the name of the soul also. Of course this om in Oriya

is not with "Anuswar" (nasal sound). It is simply 'O'. People in Orissa respond 'O' when their name is called even today. This 'O' or 'Om' was there in the populace of the land since time immemorial, i.e. from before the Rig Vedic times.

Another relevant indication requires consideration here. The word 'Purusha' is not Vedic. Purusha means - 'Atman' or properly the principle of life in control of the body. It is a word introduced into the later Vedic hymns from the west Gangetic or Punjab regions. It indicates an



outstanding feature of the religion in east-India, which was particularly in vogue in the region round about Puri or Purushottam Puri. This region is known to have been called Kalinga later times by about 800 B.C and the real philosophy originally came to the Vedas from Kalinga.

The word 'Purusha' is a jaina appellation of Jiva (Very anciently called Atman) but in the Rig Veda the word is applied to mean 'Man' having practically no religious significance attached to it. It may be mentioned here that, the main seat of the Purusha cult of Jainas was Kalinga and specially the Puri region. Om is the name of this purusha. It is very old in Kalinga as well as in the Jaina world. It was used all over the then civilized world including the early Aryan Greece of the Orphics and the Pythagoreans. In later times in various artificial and religious forms, it pervaded other religions such Judaism and Christianity.

The use of Om tradition is in vogue in Orissa from time immemorial. We found the description of 'Om' in our pithas or old religious institutions.

The saint poet Achyutananda Das of the 16th Century Orissa in his 'Sunya Samhita' explained the symbol om in a different manner. According to him 'om' represents the life principle in control of the entire Universe which is made up five elements Khiti (earth), APA (Water), Teja (heat) Maruta (air) and Byoma (sky). The Jagannath cult of Puri is also amalgamated with the essential nature of Om. In letter 'a' we found the palpitation of universal creation, in letter 'u', the gradual progress of palpitation and in letter 'm' there lays the decease stage after which prevails the total silence. These four stages have been symbolized with four images of the Jagannath temple, Puri such as - Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshan.

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Sudarshan, The King of Wheels

Sudarshan Sahoo

Atop the magnificent twelfth century temple of 214 ft. height on shore, stands the king of wheels, Sudarshan, 14 ft. in diameter, thickness of 2 inches and amalgamation of eight metals. The base holding rod is 16 ft deep into the 'Kalasa'. Long red and white banners furlor with sea breeze to herald the victory of the Lord of the Universe on this great wheel 'Nilachakra'. There are two circles in the wheel, one is at the centre and the other is the outer. Eight bars connect the inner and outer circles. Swetaswatar Upanishad (1:4) reveals the mystery of the eight bars that the whole Universe is a wheel and the bars of the wheel are mind, wisdom, selfness, sky, earth, sun, wind and water. These eight factors compose the human body. Gita (7:4) narrates the same thing that eight factors are the nature apart from the Supreme entity.

Sudarshan, one weapon in the hand of Lord Vishnu is regarded as a deity in Brahma Purana and Skanda Purana. On the 'Ratna Simhasan' of Lord Jagannath in Srimandir, Sudarshan is one of the seven deities. Here the shape is like a pole. Both the wheel and pole shapes of Sudarshan have different mythological backdrops. How Sudarshan was created it is described in Brahma Purana that to get rid of the wicked demons all Lords prayed Vishnu. He asked all Lords to combine all their energies. Lord Shankar shaped this combined energy into a wheel. He handed over this wheel to Lord Vishnu to kill the demons.

In another volume 'Pasupata Darshan' it is described that the Universe is a wheel and Lord Shankar is moving around sitting on this wheel.

During the Car Festival, Lord Sudarshan comes first to the Chariot during 'Pahandi' and placed in Devadalan, the car of deity Subhadra. Subhadra is the symbol of energy or power. Also Sudarshan is energy or Power. Hence both perform their journey sitting on the same chariot. Sudarshan is shaped like a pole. The obvious story how the wheel transformed into the pole shape is narrated in Mahabharat that once in Dwaraka Rukmini and Satyabhama wished to hear the 'Gopalila' of Srikrishna from Rohini, mother of Balarama. While Rohini described the romantic episode, she engaged Subhadra to guard the entrance door. During this time Srikrishna and Balarama arrived and alongwith Subhadra they listened the enchanting description of mother Rohini. All they plunged into great depth of passion so that their limbs started melting. The wheel in the hand of Srikrishna also melted into a pole shape. At this moment Narada arrived here and finding the three deities in the form of pole, prayed Srikrishna to retain this shape in Kali Yuga to save the devotees, that we see in Srimandir today.

Sudarshan is placed in the left of Lord Jagannath on the 'Ratna Simhasan'. In most of



the statues or pictures of Narayan the wheel is placed in the right hand as described in Sri Vishnu Purana, Brahma Purana, Nrusingha Purana, Agni Purana and Padma Purana. But in Matsya Purana the wheel is placed in the left hand of Narayana. In 'Naradiya Pancharatra Paddhati' the wheel is placed in the upper left hand of Keshaba and lower left hand of Narayana. Thus, the left side placement of Sudarshan in Srimandir is supported by ancient volumes.

The wheel is a circle and its ratio to the diameter is $22/7$. In modern mathematical science it has a permanent value with law of nature. When logs are cut to size during the time of 'Naba Kalevara', first three equal sizes are cut for the three deities and another is cut one seventh size of the three. So these are $22/7$. So it can be observed remarkably that this law of nature is carried out from ancient times in framing the size of the three deities on Vedic calculations to express a circle of super natural powers. But it is the discovery of great ancient saints of Indian soil to prove the circle which is being carried out while carving out the images of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshan long before the western scientists. So the mystery of the wheel is elevated to the supreme in Indian philosophy, and the ultimatum 'Zero' is the gift of Vedic Mathematics to the modern world.

Omkar is the representative symbol of Param Brahma. Balabhadra is 'A kar', Subhadra is 'U kar', Jagannath is 'M kar' and Sudarshan is half of the alphabetical pronunciation. Sudarshan is worshipped as source of knowledge during Bath ceremony (Snanotsav). It is described in Skanda Purana (19 : 9) that the weapons in the hands of Sri Vishnu represent knowledge (Chakra), selfness (Padma), majesty (Gada) and sound (Sankha). So Sudarshan is the symbol of knowledge in the hand of Sri Vishnu. On the 'Ratna

Simhasan' of Srimandir Balabhadra is Rig Veda, Subhadra is Yajurveda, Jagannath is Sam Veda and Sudarshan Atharva Veda. However, in the opinion of other authors, the Vedas vary with deities. Though the four deities appear to differ from each other, they are one Brahma.

Sudarshan is worshipped as Sun. It is described in Markandeya Purana that on the Nilagiri the Lord of Universe is existing in four forms named Brahma (Subhadra), Vishnu (Jagannath), Ishwar (Balabhadra) and Sun (Sudarshan). Lord Sudarshan is the symbol of immense effulgence.

Sudarshan is also worshipped as Chakra Narayan. There is a temple of Chakra Narayan near the western gate of Srimandir just opposite to Niladrivihar, inside the flower garden. The statue of eight handed Narayan sits at the centre of a wheel made of black granite stone. The eight hands are full of weapons such as conch, wheel, lotus, mace, bow, arrow, sword and lightning. In the southern entrance of Jagamohan of Srimandir, Narayan appears in the centre of a wheel on the top of a pole. Mahalaxmi is sitting on the left thigh of Narayan.

Apart from Srimandir, there are temples in different places where Sudarshan is being worshipped as 'Chakra Narayan'. Eastwards of Sri Jagannath temple in Puri stands Chakra Tirtha on the sea shore where a large Chakra in water is worshipped in the sanctum sanctorum made of black granite with a statue of Narayan at the centre. At Niali Madhab in Cuttack district the Chakra is worshipped and there is four handed deity sitting in meditation at the centre. The upper two hands are with conch and wheel and the lower two hands are in meditation posture. In the village Vishnupur near Nimapara in Puri District there is a broken temple of Lord Sun in which Chakra is worshipped.



The statue of Lord Shiva is like a pillar that resembles with Sudarshan. Worship of Lord Shiva is worship of Lord Sudarshan. Lord Shiva is the symbol of five. At the end of a Kalpa (four Yugas) the created universe finishes into fire. All the scattered celestial illuminations in the endless space come closer together in a whirling manner spirally and unite to form a Chakra in motion. This is described in the Deluge chapter of Sri Vishnu Purana. The modern astrophysical scientists have discovered at least one hundred crores of spiral galaxies in the space. But no theory have been established till date where from the power of whirling around come about. Bigbang theory has no link with spiraling. But the great Indian ancient saints have mentioned that creation and destruction of the universe takes place by whirling. Astronomical scientists have forecasted the vast universe will come to an end one day by all the celestial bodies coming close together and whirling in a single mass of flame. Same is the description in Sri Vishnu Purana. This truth also has been discovered in Swetaswatara Upanishad (1:4). Lord Shiva is the deity of destruction and the whirling effulgence at the end of the universe is Sudarshan Chakra. Hence the shape of sudarshan has been taken as Lord Shiva.

In 'Ahirbudhnyu Samhita' it is mentioned that Lord Nrusimha is consecrated and established with the 'mantra' of Sudarshan. In some other volumes also Sudarshan is compared with the furious glowing Nrusimha appearance of Lord Vishnu. In the volume 'Niladrish Archana Chandrika' Sri Jagannath is compared with Ramachandra, Balabhadra with Laxman, Subhadra with Sita and Sudarshan with Hanuman. At birth mother Anjana sent Hanuman to eat the rising sun. So the mouth of Hanuman is compared with the rising sun. As sun is described as Sudarshan, there is synonymity among Sun, Hanuman and Sudarshan.

Architecturally the Orissan temples are designed in shape of a human body. The body has six energy centres named 'Chakras' starting from 'Muladhara' in the lower part up to the 'Sahasrara' at the top. 'Sahasrara' is described as a lotus where the soul resides and from this the soul uplifts to the Param Brahma through the nerve 'Sushumna'. In the 'Sahasrara' three vital nerves known as Ida, Pingala and Sushumna control the whole system of the body. In Srimandir, Jagannath is Ida, Balabhadra is Pingala and Subhadra is Sushumna. Subhadra is in between Jagannath and Balabhadra. In Sanskrit, *'Ida Pingalayorma dhye Sushumna Brahma Rupini'* which means, in between Ida and Pingala, Sushumna is Brahma. When the sense of a Yogi culminates up to Sahasrara Chakra, it is Sudarshan Chakra on the temple where the Yogi attains Brahma, losing his personal identity. When a soul attains Brahma, his single identity is vanished. This factor is described in Mundaka Upanishad (3 : 2 : 8) that different rivers enter into sea losing their individual entity or names, thus learned souls enter into Brahma losing their individuality. In Srimandir when a devotee's soul reaches 'Nilachakra' he elevates to the infinity and gets salvation. So a 'darshan' of Nilachakra on the top of the magnificent temple is equal to reaching the 'Sahasrara Chakra' in the body through meditation and enjoying the ecstasy of achieving eternity. Sudarshan is worshipped in the 'Sahasrar Mantra.' A Yogi visualizes the supreme effulgence when his soul is united with Param Brahma. It is the state when called united existence or 'Ekadashi'. The Yogi views the blaze in his Sahasrar Chakra atop the body; but to a common devotee in Srimandir, a lamp (Mahadeepa) lightened at the Nilachakra is the symbol of viewing blaze of Param Brahma (Deepam Jyotih Param Brahma) in the evening of Ekadashi every month. The Lord



of the Universe residing in the human body as described in various Upanishads.

Lord Vishnu throws Chakra to kill some demon or evil doer. When the Chakra revolves round, it either creates some mysterious clue or finishes some existence. In Mahabharat, Srikrishna is known as 'Chakri' (The Wheeler). At the end of the Mahabharat war, Belalsen replied that only one wheel has killed every body. It is the great wheel of time that finishes the creation and that too, it is a rotation. The creation begins again and again. When the Universe is created, it is called 'Day' and when finishes, called 'Night' (Gita-8 :

18 and 19). When night comes, there is no sun, no moon, no earth, no stars, no sky or nothing else. Only great ocean of deepest darkness exists (Rig Veda - 10th Mandal, 129 Sukta, 3rd Mantra). Hence it is cycle of creation and destruction. It is the supreme wheel (Sudarshan Chakra) in the hand of the Creator / Preserver / Destructor of the Universe. He is Param Brahma Sri Jagannath.

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The Chariot of Sri Jagannath



Udaya Chandra Mishra

The chariot of Sri Jagannath goes on
amidst the sea of human beings
waiting for none.

The wheel of time goes on
day after day
month after month
year after year
waiting for none;
the chariot of the Lord
moves on.

The wheel of civilization moves on
from ancient to mediaeval
from mediaeval to modern
waiting for none
the car of Sri Jagannath
moves on.

The chariot of the Patitapavan
is a symbol of
progress, dynamism, and pragmatism
without any narrow
sense of caste, creed or religion
the chariot of Sri Jagannath moves on.

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The Distinct Speciality of Lord Jagannath

Dr. Harihar Kanungo

During the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, the Bhagabat religion in India was wrongly acclaimed as Vaishnavism under the patronage of the then rulers. Subsequently its impact was also felt in Orissa. Rationally speaking, Bhagabat religion is markedly different from Vaishnavism. The latter is associated with the worship of different contexts in Indian literature, history and religion. The word Vaishnav is derived from the word Vishnu. The word like Vishnu or Vaishnav is illogically and deliberately associated with Lord Vasudev Shrikrishna. When Brahminism revived under the patronage of the Gupta dynasty during 3rd or 4th century, this deliberate mischief found place in religion, literature and history. The reason can be found in the fact that, prior to Mahabharata war, Brahminism was associated with Sun-worship. The alien Aryans who invaded India were accustomed to worshipping the elements of nature as gods; hence Sun-worship.

Sun-worship was mainly confined to Yagna (holy offerings to the fire-god). Sacrifice of animals and drinking of Soma-Rasa. Under the influence of Lord Srikrishna's diplomacy during the Mahabharata war, people shifted their attention from yagna and worship of elements and turned them in to introspective spiritualism. In keeping with that basic change, the post-Mahabharata era witnessed the advent of introspective religions like Jainism and Buddhism. These religions had such

a profound impact on the contemporary society that the practice of Sun-worship and worship of the elements of nature characterizing Brahminism was totally discontinued. In fact, right after the end of the Mahabharata war, the Bhagabat dharma, introduced by Vasudeva Srikrishna along with Jainism and Buddhism had greatly influenced the people and put an end to Brahminism. It could not revive even by 3rd or 4th century.

Protagonists of Brahminism cleverly conspired, by means of surrogate language and jargon to identify Saivism and Vasudev Srikrishna with the Sun-God or Lord Vishnu and nearly succeeded in getting public support for their endeavour. The derivation of the word Vishnu can be found in 1, 85, 7:6, 48,14 Mandalas, Sukta and mantra in the Rig Veda.¹ Elsewhere in the Rig veda, the Sun-god or Lord Vishnu has been portrayed as a God of sacrifice. Can there be any justification for identifying such a god of external and inanimate nature with Vasudev Sri Krishna? The latter is the presiding deity of an introspective religion and hence the efforts of the torch bearers of Brahminism to treat Vasudev Srikrishna on par with the Sun-god or Vishnu, god of outward and inanimate nature is highly unrealistic. The reason is that when the supporters of Brahminism discovered that the worship of Vishnu or the Sun-god can not stand the powerful influence of Saivism, the Bhagabat religion,



Jainism or Buddhism, they propagated rather fraudulently about Shiva, Buddha etc. being the incarnations of Vishnu or the Sun-god. By massive false propaganda, they have managed to ensure the perpetuation of Sun-worship which prevails even today. Such endeavours led to revival of Brahminism during the rule of the Gupta dynasty. This conspiracy no doubt eluded the people. But, still, they have never accepted Vishnu as Sun-god at any time. The patrons of Brahminism derive a great mental satisfaction by keeping the Sun-god in the guise of Lord Vishnu.

The Protagonists of Yagyajna (Sacrificial offerings to the fire-god) and Sun-worship, under the encouraging patronage of state-power penned several Puranic literature where they invariably propagated that all the deities and religious beliefs worshipped and sustained by the people irrespective of caste or creed were mere parts of incarnations of Lord Vishnu or Sun-god. Therefore we find in the Puranas that Lord Rama, the Son of Kaushalya, Vasudev Srikrishna, Gautam Buddha and Nrusingha have been portrayed and propagated as parts of the so-called Lord Vishnu or Sun-god. Lord Sriram, Lord Srikrishna, the son of Devaki, Lord Nrusingha who emerged out of a shattered pillar greatly influenced and inspired the contemporary society as symbols of inward consciousness. Unfortunately, the protagonists of Brahminism, in the Puranic literature purposefully created by them, identified these gods with the worship of the inanimate Sun-god or Vishnu. The state power no doubt encouraged and patronized such propagandas. The people, though confused, rejected such notions outright. Along with the mythological characters like ShriRam, Srikrishna and Nursingha, the historical religious leaders of Buddhism and Jainism like Gautam Buddha or Mahavir Jain were falsely propagated as the incarnations of the Sun-god or Vishnu. The

confusion these propagandas created can be traced to Lord Jagannath of Puri.

Historically and ethically speaking, Lord Jagannath, the presiding deity of the land of Odra was worshipped by the Buddhists during the 7th and 8th centuries as the overall manifestation of the spiritual consciousness of different tribal groups like the Odras and the Nagas. The Buddhists accomplished unanimity in the diverse religious beliefs of these different tribal races like Nagas and Odras and this gave rise to the practice of worshipping Lord Jagannath. That is why we find the influence of Buddhism in the cult of Lord Jagannath even today. Such synchronized religious feeling and reasoning reflect an introspective consciousness having its own speciality and distinction profoundly affecting the minds of all Indians. That is why during the 7th and 8th centuries; Lord Jagannath was acclaimed as the presiding deity of the entire Odra region. We find in Madalapanji that with the rise of Keshari dynasty, Jajati became the monarch. He searched for this state deity of Orissa and installed Him in Puri. By the time of the Lord's installation, the popular gods like Lord Shriram and Vasudev Shrikrishna were given the title of Purushottam (The perfect man and the propaganda of their being parts or incarnations of Lord Vishnu or Surya (The Sun God) went on unabated. These propagandas originated from the Puranic literature since the 3rd and 4th centuries and are still in vogue.

After Lord Jagannath's installation in Puri by royal effort, he too has been fraudulently termed as a part or incarnation of Lord Vishnu or the Sun God. His name, therefore has acquired the prefix of Purushottam or the perfect man. Initially, Lord Jagannath was described as a miraculous derivation of Nrusingha and subsequently, he is identified with Vasudev



Srikrishna. But from the historical and logical view point, even by his acquiring this prefix of Purushottam, he can neither be identified with Nrusingha nor with Shri Krishna, the Purushottam. The word Purushottam or the perfect man, fails to convey the full significance of the omnipresent Lord Jagannath, from the ethical point of view. Possibly, this is the view expressed by Dibakar Das, a 17th century poet in his book of verse 'Jagannath Charitamrita' - "Lord Jagannath is cent percent complete with Divine Qualities, a part of which went to Srikrishna the son of Nanda. But he turned this part into one hundred percent and moved around in the land of Gopa."²

From this, we find that 'Purushottam' or the Perfect man is qualitative concept. But a deliberate attempt has been made to attach this term to Lord Jagannath who defies any qualitative description (Gunatita). He is far beyond logical reasoning and some one very special. So from this view point, Lord Shri Ram has been called 'Maryada Purushottam' (the Perfect Man of Glory), Srikrishna or Nrusingha also carry this prefix as all of them have been propagated as belonging to the category of Lord Vishnu. Lord Jagannath is altogether a different phenomenon and beyond qualitative description. Unfortunately 'Purushottam' is prefixed to this name so that He can be easily called an incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

The ancestors of the Monarchs belonging to the Soma or Keshari dynasty made Sripur of Madhya Pradesh their capital and ruled in that state. Nrusingha, the Purushottam, was their house-hold deity. From an inscription preserved in the Museum of Raipur, it is learnt that, in the 8th century, Basatta Devi, a queen of the Soma dynasty, has built a temple in Sripur and installed her house hold deity, Nrusingha, the Perfect Man, there. In the years that followed, descendants of

Soma dynasty who ruled Sonepur in Orissa also built a temple in the mountain region of Gandhamardan, installed Nrusingha, the Perfect Man in that temple and worshipped Him. That is the famous Nrusinghanath temple of Bolangir. We learn from history that, years after, the descendants of Soma dynasty also built a temple at Puri, for the worship of their household deity, Lord Nrusingha, the Purushottam. Having conquered different regions in Orissa, the Somavanshi kings installed the statues of Purushottam Nrusingha in those places and encouraged His worship. They also patronized many books of verses eulogizing the deity, Purushottam Nrusingha. "Anargha Raghav", a drama by Murari Mishra, "Prabodha Chandrodaya," another drama by Krishna Mishra, "Vaswati" by Satananda, 'Krutya Kalpataru' and 'Brahma Yamalatantra' are some of these books lauding the Lord Nrusingha the household deity of the Somavanshi rulers, brought from Sripur of Madhya Pradesh. Many historians, litterateurs and research scholars have deliberately attempted to identify this Purushottam Nrusingha with Lord Jagannath. Such attempts were wrong and miss leading. Puri was widely propagated as Purushottam Kshetra (or the land of the Perfect Man) only because the Soma Vanshi kings installed the deity Nrusingha (brought from Sripur in Madhya Pradesh) in Puri. These kings tried to popularise Nrusingha-worship throughout Orissa. Hence Puri earned the epithet Purushottam Kshetra. But in later period, Lord Jagannath earned the status and recognition of being the presiding deity of the Odra land and was installed in Puri and in due course of time replaced Nrusingha who had earned the same status before. So Puri, previously called Purushottam kshetra (or the land of the Perfect man) came to be known in due course of event as the land of Lord



Jagannath who was installed there as the presiding deity and was worshipped.

So "Purushottam Kshetra"(the land of the Perfect Man and Jagannath Dham)the land of Lord Jagannath are not at all synonymous. "Purushottam" and "Jagannath" are different terms, the former referring to "Purushottam Nrusingha" and not to Lord Jagannath. However, the unjustified effort is on to identify Jagannath with Purushottam as well as to equate Lord Jagannath with Lord Vishnu. From time to time, this effort has obtained royal patronage which encouraged the writing of such fictitious and propagandist puranas like Skanda Purana.³

We can also mention the age-old attempts to equate Lord Jagannath with Purushottam Nrusingha. And at a later stage, the Vaishnavites adopted a different strategy to identify Lord Jagannath with Vasudeva Srikrishna, the Presiding deity of Bhagabat religion. Of course, taking a closer look, we can not find any marked difference between the religious aspects of Vasudeva Srikrishna and Lord Jagannath. But still, both are certainly not identical. Just as Vasudeva Srikrishna of Bhagabat religion is distinctly different from Vishnu or Surya worshipped by the Vaishnavities, similarly, the cult of Lord Jagannath, enunciated by the Buddhists, is different from that of Vasudeva Shri Krishna. But as a result of conspiracy laid out by the Vaishnavities, many propagandist Puranic works proclaiming Vasudeva Shri Krishna as the incarnation or part of Lord Vishnu came into being. In a similar manner, malafide efforts to identify Lord Jagannath with Vasudeva Shri Krishna with the help of Propagandist Puranas have never stopped.

Possibly noting this, Jayadev, a 12th century poet wrote in his Dasavatara Stotram -

"Thou, O Keshava ! Who discredited the rituals of yajna and the Vedas, thou whose soul wept

witnessing the religious sacrifice of animals, incarnated thyself as Lord Buddha. Glory to thee, O Jagadish (Lord of universe) Hari."

It is obvious that Jayadeva was referring to Lord Keshava or Srikrishna reincarnating Himself as Lord Buddha or Lord Jagannath. But despite all the apparent similarities research scholars have proved that they are not inseparable. As has been said earlier, under pressure of circumstance the patrons of Vaishnavism or Brahminism had drawn Vasudeva Srikrishna into their religious fold. However, the cult of Lord Jagannath is very special and distinct. Conforming this distinctive aspect of Lord Jagannath, Dr. Harekrishna Mahatab has aptly observed in his "History of Orissa":-

"Three factors prevent us from accepting Jagannath as the Lord of Brahminism, they are, (i) the name, "Jagannath " (The Lord of Universe), (ii) The very statue of Jagannath, (iii) The presence of Suvadra with Him.

So how did the name "Krishna Vasudeva" "Vanish and was replaced by Jagannath?" Along with their effort to proclaim, Lord SriRam, Lord Srikrishna and Lord Nrusingha Vishnu or Surya incarnate, the patrons of Brahminism spared no pain in encouraging the special worship of Surya or Vishnu in Orissa. This effort was very expensive. The Sun-Temple at Konark (Arka kshetra or the Land of Sun) testifies to this. All the revenue Orissa earned in twelve years was spent for the construction of this temple. The Sun-Temple, no doubt, is a marvellous object of art. But the basic purpose (Sun-worship) for which it was built went flak with the people of Orissa. Although they are proud of this beautiful artistic work, they have never taken to worshipping Vishnu or Surya. That is why the Sun Pillar (Arun Stambha) of the Konark Temple was shifted to Puri and was placed in front of the Lion's gate of



Jagannath Temple facing the Grand Road. On the other hand the Konark Temple has become a ruined mess. Is it not proof enough that people of Orissa never accepted the practice of worshipping Vishnu ? Many people attribute the dilapidated state of Konark temple to natural and geographical factors. But this is not true. Both the Jagannath temple of Puri and the Sun-temple at Konark are situated near the sea-shore. But the latter is of a more 'recent' build. One hundred years after the Puri temple was built (1115-1147AD) by Chodaganga of Ganga dynasty (1078-1147AD), King Narasingha Deva or Langula Narasingha Deva (1238-1264AD) built the Sun-temple at Konark with much gusto; the place was named Arka-kshertra (the land of Sun-God) and found a glorious mention in fictitious Puranas like the Samba Purana. Despite these much hyped propagandas, the temple remained unused and closed to public view round the year. Only on the day of Magha Saptami, devotees gather here to take a holy dip in the near by Chandrabhaga. This rite has nothing to do with the Konark temple. Of course, the devotees are certainly enchanted by the artistic excellence of the temple, but it does not raise any religious feelings in their hearts. The temple does not have any priests or servitors. Thus for the want of use and sheer disinterest of the public, the temple collapsed and remains ruined and abandoned. This rather than natural factors is a greater cause for its devastation. Due to lack of religious attachment to the temple, no effort has been made for its up keep and repair. In contrast to this, the temple of Lord Jagannath is a crowd - puller and primarily in public interest timely repairs and preservation of this sacred monument have been done.

Temples have cropped up time and again with much pomp and ceremony in different parts of India. The state- power has encouraged their construction and has tried forcibly to impose them on the people. But since they have failed to touch their hearts, people have outright rejected them. As a result, many of the temples are in shambles. As a matter of fact, nowhere in India, people have accepted the practice of worshipping Vishnu or Surya : hence the wretched condition of their temples. So the patrons of such worship have made a feeble attempt to sustain it by propagating an imaginary religion called Vaishnavism and giving a Vaishnavic religion. On the other hand, Lord Jagannath draws millions of people from every part of the world to Puri. This proves that the cult of Lord Jagannath is superior to Vaisnavism and it is a humanitarian religion. So it is clear from the above discussion that Jagannath is different from Purushottam Nrusingha or Vasudeva Shrikrishna.

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Vaishnavism in Orissan Inscriptions

Bharati Pal

Vaishnavism, like Saivism is a very old cult and its origin goes back to the Rig Vedic period when God Vishnu was conceived as a member of the Solar family. Lord Vishnu, the supreme God has been worshipped in various names and forms, from time to time with different modes of doctrines and rituals. The literary and epigraphic sources throw considerable light on the revival of Vaishnava cult.

In Orissa, the earliest epigraphic evidences on Vaishnavism is traced in the copper plates grants of Mathara dynasty who ruled about 4th/5th Century A.D. The Ningondi grants¹ of Prabhanjanavarman record that he was the devout worshipper at the feet of Bhagavat Svami Narayana. In the Andhavarm grants² of Anantasaktivarman there is a description that the Maharaja Anantasaktivarman, who is the Lord of Kalinga and a devout worshipper at the lotus-feet of the God Narayana whose chest was embraced by Kamalanilaya (Lakshmi).

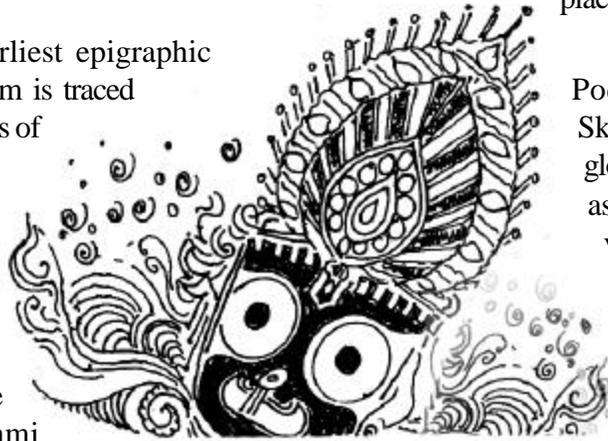
The Nala dynasty who ruled over Western Orissa was great patron of Vaishnavism. From the epigraphic record that "Padamulam Krutam

Vishnu Rajna Sri Skanda-Varmana". Which proof that Skanda-Varman was an ardent devotee of Vishnu and an active patron of Vaishnavism. From the epigraphic evidences of Podagada stone inscription and Rajim stone inscriptions, it is evident that Vaishnavism which revolves round the supreme God Vaishnu and its diverse manifestation at different places of Nala kingdom.

The first verse in the Podagada³ inscription of Skandavarman contains a glorification of Hari in his aspects, as the essence of victory. Line 5th and 6th record his foundation of a Padamula or foot print of Vishnu, for the worship of which he made the gift of money

in shape of Bhuri-dakshina to the donee Chakradrona. In the next verse it is stated that "he who conforms to the good path followed by king for long find refuge in God Vasudeva."

The object of the Rajim stone inscription⁴ is that a king named Vilastunga, constructing a temple dedicated to Vishnu under the name of Rajivalochana (lotus eyed). In the 4th line it describes a form of dialogue between Hari and





Lakshmi, while the 5th mention the Dwarf incarnation of Vishnu.

Thus we find definite references to the worship of Vishnu in Orissa in the early period. The Sailodbhavas who reigned in the Kongoda mandala in the 7/8th Century A.D. were followers of Saivism, but some of them had Vaishnavite leaning. The Puri plates⁵ of Dharmaraja states that "his ever increasing fame could not be contained in the three worlds even as the legs of Hari in the Vamana incarnation." About his successor Madhyamaraja III, the Takkali plates⁶ states that Lakshmi who formerly had taken shelter under Lord Madhusudana enjoying sleep in the ocean of milk, had today like a veritable house wife taken shelter under the son of Manabhita and forgotten all her previously enjoyed facilities".

The earlier rulers of Bhaumakaras who ruled in the 8th/9th Century A.D. were ardent Buddhist, but the later rulers were eclectic in their faith. There is a reference of Paramavaishnavi in the Dhenkanal grant of Tribhuvanamahadevi.⁷

But during the reign of Bhanja, Vaishnavism seems to here progressed. We find a number of rulers of this dynasty professing devotion to Vishnu. Satrubhanja and Ranaka Ranabhanja called themselves devout followers of Vishnu and used the epithet as Paramavaishnava. In the Juruda Grant⁸ of Nettabhanjadeva, the king is described as a Parama Vaishnva and the grant commences with an invocation to God Narayana, who is stated to be the family deity (Kula-devata) of the Bhanja. In the Sonpur copper plate⁹ charter Satrubhanja described as a fervent devotee of God Vishnu (*Parama-Vaishnava*).

The Panduvamsi, copper plates grants contains elaborate prasasti. They used the title of Parma-mahesvara, Paramabrahmanaya etc. But in the Sirpur stone inscription¹⁰ of Mahasivagupta, begins with an invocation to Purushottama. The

first three verses are elevated to the praise of Narasimha incarnation to Vishnu and construction of a temple for Hari by the Vasta the mother of Mahasivagupta Balarjuna. She was the daughter of Suryavarma king of Magadha. She became a widow and caused to be constructed a temple of Hari.

Though the Somavamsi ruler were great patron of Saivism but their Charter contain their homage to Aditya, Varuna, Vaishnu, Soma, Hutasana and Sulapani.

Practically the same state of Vaishnavism continued in the early period of the Ganga rule. The Ganga ruler were at beginning Parama Mahesvara devout followers of Siva, but since the time of Anantavarmana Chodagangadeva they changed their faith from Saivism to Vaishnavism D.C.Sircar¹¹ thinks that the annexion of Puri region to the Ganga empire may have had something to do with change in the religious faith of Anantavarman Chodangadeva. But this change may also contributed to the preaching of Vaishnavism by Ramanunja¹² who flourished in the 12th Century A.D. He visited and stayed at Puri, probable this converted Anantavarman into a Paramavaishnava from a Paramamahesvara. In the Chatesvara temple inscription¹³ Chodangadeva described at an incarnation of the Narasimha avatara of Vishnu. As we know from other records that Chodaganga ancestors were all staunch devotee of the God Siva and that Chodaganga himself was one such in the earlier part of life, later on a devotee of Vishnu alone.

In the Vizagpatnam inscription¹⁴ Chodaganga assumed the title Rajadhiraja Paresvara, Paramabhataraka, Paramvaishnav which means he was devout follower of Vishnu. In the Nagari plate of Anagabhima III¹⁵ there is a reference of Gangesvara Chadagangadeva, built a temple for the great God Purushottama.



The Kapilas inscription¹⁶ of Narashimhadeva, record that the king was the devotee of God Purushottama Jagannatha identified with *Vishnu*. He is described as Purushottama Putro and compare him with great Boar (Vaishnu in his *Varaha Avatara*) incarnation. Further the charter describe that the king succeeded in subduing by the power of his arms the pride of his enemies in numerous battles at the command of the God Purushottam, the Lord of the fourteen world.

In the Draksharama temple inscriptions,¹⁷ Anangabhima III himself is called both *Paramavaishnava* and *Paramamahesvara* as well as *Purushottama putra*, *Rudra-putra* and *Durga putra*.

Since the time of Anantavarman Chodagangadeva, Vaishnavism received royal patronage of the Gangas and acquired a dominant position. It becomes a great force in the religious life of Orissa, several *Vaishnava* temples came to be constructed. The great Vishnu temple built during the Ganga period was the famous Jagannath temple at Puri.

The Jagannath temple at Puri was the most important center of Vaishnavism in Orissa in the 12th Century A.D., even now it is one of the holiest places of India. Generation after generation *Vaishnavas* or Devout Hindus have visited the holy *Purushottama Kshetra* to offer worship

and secure immunity from sins and the institution of Jagannath has influenced the life of the Oriya people from the early of times to the present day.

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Jagannath, The Eclectic Lord of the Universe

Dr. C. B. Patel

The popular Jagannath Culture is a mysterious conception. Many distinguished scholars from different parts of the country and abroad have attempted to solve the mystery of origin and evolution of Jagannath consciousness and have stumbled confusedly at the platform of religious eclecticism of world eminece. Jagannath allows all and admits all, yet he is aloof from all. It is also said that he is all of it and none of it. He is like a mirror where all can see their reflections but cannot touch. He adorned his *Ratnasimhasan* efflorescently admitting flexibility, adaptability, integrity and magnanimity of all dynamics of Hinduism. For this, the Jainas, Bauddhas, Vaisnavas, Saivas, Saktas, the tribal oboriginals, prelates and potentates surrender at his feet seeking eternal salvation. The earlist reference to Jagannath-Daru worship is found in the Vedic literature. In the Mahabharata there is mention about a Vedi near the eastern Kalingan sea which was visited by the Pandavas.



Scholars have identified this spot with the present day Jagannath temple complex of Puri. Indrabhuti, the king of Sambala in his famous work *Gyanasiddhi* refers to Jagannath as Buddha in the 8th century A.D. The invocatory *Sloka* of the famous Vajrayana trantric work says -

*“Pranipatya Jagannatham Sarvajinavararchitam,
Sarvabuddhamayam Siddham Vyapino Gagonopanam.”*

Sankaracharya in course of his religious conquest of India in 8th/9th century A.D. visited Puri and worshipped Jagannath. The *Anargharaghava Natakam* of Murari Misra (9th century A.D.) refers to Purusottama. There is mention about a ‘*Devayatana*’ that existed at Puri in *Prabodha Chandra-dayo Natakam* of Krusna Misra (11th century A.D). The Saradadevi temple inscription of Maihar in Satna district of Madhya Pradesh describes Purusottama as the Lord of Utkala in 10th century A.D. In the Baramdeo temple epigraph of 1088 A.D. and Nagpur inscription



of 12th century A.D., there is reference to Purusottama Kshetra that existed in Orissa. In ancient Hindi literature like *Bisaldev Raso* (12th century A.D.) and *Prithvirayo Raso* of the same century Jagannath is described as the deity of Orissa.

Thus there is ample evidence of the existence of Jagannath at Puri since remote antiquity. The glory and greatness of Jagannath and Puridham find mention in the *Puranas* like *Matsya*, *Brahma*, *Narada*, *Padma Kapilasamhita*, *Niladrimahodaya* and the *Utkal Khanda* of the *Skanda Purana*. In all such *Puranas*, he has been described as the famous deity of Odra or Utkala. In the tantric works like *Kalika Purana*, *Rudrayamala tantra*, *Brahmayamala tantra* and *Tantrayamala*, etc. of the 10th century A.D. Jagannath is mentioned conspicuously.

The foreign scholars like Stevens, Wilson and Fergusson etc have traced His origin in Buddhism. Rajendralal Mitra has opined that during pre-Christian century only Buddhism was in vogue in Orissa. Chinese traveller like Yuan Chwang has narrated that Mahayana Buddhism was the religion of Utkala in 7th century A.D.. This school of scholars believe that original Jagannath temple complex was a Buddhist establishment. Very recently a Chunar sand stone pillar has been traced out below the fossilised Garuda pillar of Natamandira during repair work by ASI. This further strengthened the Buddhist origin of Jagannath. From the funeral pyre of Buddha at Kusinagar a tooth relic was known to have been brought by Therakhema to Puri of Orissa. There after, for centuries Puri was called Dantapuri. It is believed that it is still there as *Brahmadhatu*, in the wooden statue of Jagannath which is mysteriously shifted to the new idol at the time of *Navakalevara*. Alexander Cunningham has stated that “the three shapeless

figures of Jagannath and his brother and sister are simple copies of the symbolical figures of the Buddhist triad i.e. Buddha, Dharma and Sangha of which the second is always represented as a female. The Buddhist origin of the Jagannath figure is proved beyond all doubt by their adoption as the representative of the Brahmanical *avatara* of Buddha in the annual almanacs of Mathura and Benaras.” Dr. H. K. Mahatab has also referred to a similar stone of Asokan polish with the symbol of Buddha, Sangha and Dharma discovered and sent to Calcutta University sometime back for preservation in Asutosh Museum. According to him “the *Savaras* of Orissa were converted to Buddhism during the time of Asoka and worshipped the *Triratna* symbol in a Buddhist *Stupa* at Puri. Later on in the 7th/8th century A.D., when Buddha was considered as an *avatara* of Vishnu, Jagannath was also considered to be an *avatara* of Vishnu. Gradually Buddhism lost itself in Vaisnavism.”

Another school of scholar like Nilakantha Das believed in Jaina association of Jagannath cult, so far its origin is concerned. He has tried to identify Nilamadhava with Kalinga Jina referred to in the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela which was known to have been taken by Nanda ruler as war trophy in 4th century B.C. The said Jaina symbol came to be known as *Nila* i.e. void or black. The image of Jagannath, that is why represents black colour or void. Subhadra is being identified with the Dharmachakra of Jainas and Kaivalya so closely connected with Jagannath, has in fact Jaina origin. Kedar Nath Mahapatra and Binayak Misra also subscribe to this school of thought. For this they have attempted to identify the legendary Indradyumna with emperor Kharavela who brought back the Kalinga Jina in the 1st century B. C. which was taken away by Mahapadma Nanda in 4th century B.C. to Pataliputra.



Jagannath is also adorned as *Darudevata* of Vedic literature and Bhagavatism. According to Prof. P.Mukherji in about 5th century A.D. during the Gupta rule, Sankarsana and Vasudeva came to be worshipped as Balarama and Jagannath. The *Brihat Samhita* of Varahamihira of 6th century A.D. associated Ekanamsa with Subhadra. In Harivansa, she is described as the daughter of Nandaraja and also as the common sister of Jagannath and Balabhadra. Under the influence of the Bhagavatism, she came to be worshipped as Subhadra as their common Sakti being the sister, a phenomenon unknown to Indian tradition. Thus the cult of Shakti entered into the fold of Jagannath worship in a zigzag manner baffling the beholders and philosophers alike.

Another strange aspect of the Cult is the Sabar connection in the origin and worship of Jagannath tradition. Sarala Das in the *Musaliparva* of *Mahabharata* has written in the 15th century A.D. and said that after the Mahabharata War the Pandavas left for heaven through Himalaya Mountain. The Yadava Vansa of Krishna got destroyed by Krishna himself through the deluge of intoxication and homicide of the clan.

The *Krishna avatara lila* of *Dvapara Yuga* was thus to be concluded. Lord Krishna, to leave the mundane world was swinging in the forest. A *Savara*, thinking him to be a deer shoot an arrow at Krishna. When the *Savara* came to know of this he cried and prayed God to excuse him. Consoling him the Lord said that this incident was preordained to put an end to his *avatara* of *Dvapara Yuga*. He further directed him to burn his body and to immerse the ashes in the ocean. The *Savara* could not completely burn His body. As per heavenly direction, he threw it in the ocean. It floated and in course of time came to Mahodadhi i.e. Puri sea beach. The then king of Puri Indradyumna dreamt of this and as per the

divine direction brought it to the palace to make the wooden statues of Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath.

A story goes that no carpenter could handle the wooden log. Ultimately an old carpenter came and assured the king that he can make the statues under one condition that he would not be disturbed for fourteen days and he would do his job inside the temple by locking the door. The king agreed to the terms and conditions. But hearing no sound of the carpenter from outside, the Queen insisted the king to break open the door before the completion of fourteen days and to his surprise the king found the deities half made and the old carpenter vanished. He prayed God who advised him to worship Him in that form which we find today. Many such other stories in different versions are found about the *Savara* connection of the Jagannath culture. The *Daitapatis* now claim their origin to this *Savar* tribe.

Thus the synthetic and syncretic cult of Jagannath is the embodiment of several cults of diverse religious philosophies that existed in India in different periods of her long cultural history. In the historic process of assimilation, it has embraced strange contradictions and varied traditions of amazing diction. There is no discarding of any religious sentiment in Jagannath culture. Pandit Nilakantha Das has rightly surmised that “all the gods and goddesses attacking and appealing have found a place in the compound of the temple. Jagannath has welcomed and embraced all, but been overwhelmed by none and has lost himself in none.”

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The concept of a Holy Trinity, i.e. one God manifested in triple form, exists in Hindu religious doctrines since the vedic time. In vedic philosophy, the core of modern Hinduism, Brahman or the Prime Soul is described as Sat (existence), Chit (awareness) and Ananda (bliss absolute).

In the Svetasvatara Upanisad, the Prime Soul (Brahman) is conceived as a Triad (Trinity). In the seventh 'mantra' it is said 'Tasmin trayam supratistha' which means in the Supreme Brahman there is the Triad. As interpreted by Swami Tyagisananda, "the expression (Triad) signifies the world of multiplicity, which is conceived as different series of three like time, space and causation; waking, dream and sleep etc. The world of multiplicity may be said to exist in Brahman either in reality as the theists would have it, or by way of super impositions as the Advaitins would prefer".

Later on, the concept of Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva is said to have developed during the medieval period. They are the three cardinal Gods of Hinduism who represent 'Srusti' (creation), 'Sthiti' (preservation) and 'pralaya' (destruction) respectively. The process of creation, preservation and destruction continues perpetually in a cyclic order. But from the point of view of religious worship, Hindus can be divided in three main groups as Saiva (who worship Siva), Sakta (who worship Sakti) and Vaishnava (who worship Vishnu or Krishna). Brahman is seldom worshipped.

The Hindu Trimurti (Triad or Trinity) have parallels in some other religions. In Buddhism, there

The Holy Trinity

Mahimohan Tripathy

is Trinity (called Triratna) represented by Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. In Christian theology, there is a Holy Trinity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The ancient Egyptians of early dynasties conceived their Prime Trinity of a Sun-God, Earth-Mother and (a combined) Sun-over-Earth Son.

In a place Bodh-Kharbu in Tibet, there is a 'Triratna' or 'Parameshra'. 'Parameshra' is a variant of the word 'Parameshwar'. The Triratna means three small brick built temples painted black, yellow and white, symbolizing Buddha, Dharma and Sangha respectively. If eyes are added to these temples at the top, the black one would come to represent Jagannath, the yellow Subhadra and the white one Balaram or Balabhadra. Swami Abhedananda who visited this place has said "Although Jagannath, Balaram and Subhadra in the temple at Puri symbolise, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the whole thing has come to assume a different meaning in course of time". (vide 'Swami Abhedananda's journey into Kashmir and Tibet', published by Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, Calcutta, May,-2002).

In the Puri Sri Jagannath temple, the Triad on the ratnavedi, Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are worshipped as Krishna-Vasudev, Balaram or Balabhadra and Subhadra, because of vaishnavite preponderance.

Mahimohan Tripathy lives at 56, Suryanagar, Bhubaneswar - 3.



Lord Jagannath and Kripasindhu Das

Er. Raghunath Patra



In Western Orissa, lived a Brahmin
Kripasindhu by name.
generous he was towards poor
lived with name and fame.

Adverse hours approached him
lost all wealth, he had
one after another, lost children
a wretched life, he lead.

To Sri Jagannath, he surrendered all
did not care for want
engrossed himself all the while
looked for divine grant.

His wife told "if beggar comes
nothing is there at home
better commit suicide both
then to beg and roam.

Hear my beloved "Consoled he
Lord Jagannath is there
please have patience, faith on Him
never brood and despair

From neighbour darling! borrow some flour
make ten pieces of bread
with five, I shall proceed to Puri
with rest you manage, he said.

Sri Jagannath in guise of Vaishnav
came to them for food
all the breads, they offered Him
served Him well, they could.

Both the spouse, starved that night
Vaishnav slept there sound
next morning, when got up both
amazed to see around.

House is packed with house hold goods
Guest was vanished from them
Brahmin pondered, told his wife
Jagannath's celestial fame.

Both the spouse, praised aloud
The grace of Lord in glee
spent devoted, rest of life
before they used to flee.

Honestly served distressed souls
As guests, they honoured all
Food and clothing, offered to poor
attended needy's call.

Er. Raghunath Patra lives at Brindaban Dham,
Lokanath Road, Puri.



Daru Bramha Purusottam as Depicted in 'Sarala Mahabharata'

Sachidananda Behera

*"Jai Jagannath Swami
Nayan Pathagami Bhabatume."*

Duryodhan, the crest jewel of the Kaurava race along with his younger brothers and warriors like Bhishma, Drona, Karna and others breathed his last in the great Mahabharat war. On the otherhand, the Pandavas and their wife Draupadi started for their eternal journey to Heaven. In order to end the mal-administration, growing indiscipline and anarchy of the past days and to re-establish religious truth Lord Srikrishna the king of Dwaraka, destroyed His own race. Later, the sacred soul of Shri Krishna merged with the supreme soul of Lord Vishnu as he breathed his last being struck by the poisonous arrow of hunter Jara Savar. During this critical juncture, the royal throne of Indraprastha remained vacant. Taking all these incidents as the base material, the epic Mahabharat was written adopting the conversation between Agasti and king Manu. The grandson of mighty Arjuna, righteous Parikshita adorned the royal throne of Indraprastha. As a great literary creation of his time *Shrimad Bhagabat* was composed adopting the conversations between Shukadev and king Parikshita. Later, *Shrimad Bhagabat Gita* was written incorporating the 575 cantos of Shrikrishna's version at the begining of Kurukshetra war, 84 of Arjuna, 40 of Sanjaya, one from Dhrtarastra. The grand total of these cantos comes to 700. Still, all these voluminous

literary creations are not enough to trace the essence of Lord Purusottama.

Since time immemorial, the dwelling house of the Supreme Lord of the Universe, Shree Jagannath is accepted as a holy place of India and glittering with pure Orissan culture and heritage. The magnitude of Lord Jagannath is first bloomed as a tribal deity and later on as Bouddha, Jaina and Vaisnab. Although in the past Shri Jagannath was described as Bouddha and Jina, the great Jagannath culture is not influenced by any sectarian principle in any age, rather the same has influenced many sects.

The greatness of *Darubramha* has become lively in *Sarala Mahabharata*. Once being enraged, king Hiranya questioned his minor son Prahallad about the existence of Lord Vishnu. Prahallad trembling with fear indicated towards a pillar of the palace as his answer. Hearing the bold answer of Prahallad, Hiranyakashiapu with much cruelty and wrath hit the pillar by his sword. Immediately, Lord Vishnu emerged out of the pillar taking the form of a lion-headed human being and mitigated the sorrows of Prahallad. According to the great Oriya poet Sharala Das.

*Are Jala Analu Tarilu Narayananku Dhyae |
Mote Kahakina Tora Narayan Achhi Kahin //*

*Re Re Kara Karina Uthila Bira Nade |
Se Thambena Praharila Neye Bama Pade //*



*Hiranya Bidarina Ananta Jagannath /
Prahallada Kai Chirayusha Dianta Se Natha //*

(Sarala Mahabharat - Bhisma Parva.)

The lion-headed God is named as God Narasingha, who is also regarded as the fourth incarnation of Lord Vishnu. In his invocation, Sharala Das has described God Narasingha as Shri Jagannath. Both Lord Shri Rama Chandra and Lord Shri Krishna Chandra are also named as Kodandadhari and Dandadhari. Thus, it indicates the relation of these Lords with *Daru*. In the *Musali Parva* of Oriya Mahabharat, it has been described that the hunter Jara scored an arrow to Lord Shrikrishna and the Lord breathed his last and merged with Lord Vishnu. Later, Jara and Arjuna, while started to perform the cremation of Lord Shrikrishna, they heard the heavenly voice, "set fire to my mortal remains using the log on which you would find the symbols conch, wheel, club and lotus. As per the direction, Arjun placed the body of Lord Shrikrishna on sandal wood and set fire. But the *Pinda* (heart) did not burn. During the event, Jara thought that Shrikrishna had earned sins during His life time and thus, the fire is unable to make His body to ashes. According to Sarala Das -

*Puni Bicharai Ye Rabana Maila /
Bala Kalare Je Rohini Badha Kala //*
*Gogosthe Pasina Sandhasura Mari /
Balatkare Harila Gouraba Gopastiree //*
*Jabante Se Dosa badha na kala aba /
Paraloke Ani Lagaila Badha //*

While Jara was thinking deeply, again the Heavenly voice resounded, "This heart will not be gutted in fire. Immerse the body in the sea, it will be worshipped on the *Neelasundar* hill." After alapse of long years, a *Daru* was seen floating in the sea. King Indradyumna and Savar Biswabasu brought the *Daru* to the shore, as per

the order of the God. After installation of the deities inside the temple, Sri Jagannath expressed His extreme happiness and ordered king Indradyumna for soliciting boon as per his desire. According to poet Shri Krishna Das in *Deulatola -*

*Tumbhe Jebe Baradeba Maguacchi Muhin /
Mohara Bansare Kehi Nathibe Gosain //*

*Putra Nati Bolibe Je Deula Ambhara /
Ambhara Bolante Dharma Jiba Je Mohara //*

Such type of sacrifice is indeed rare. The Gods did not understand the mystery behind this sacrifice. This symbolises the greatest ideal of Shri Jagannath Conciousness.

Shri Jagannath Culture represents a voice of spiritual equality. Being inspired by Shri Jagannath Conciousness, Goddess Laxmi made her kind presence in the cottage of a low caste woman, for which act of her, she was insulted and scandalised. Atlast, victory of equality has been accepted by all. In the voice of Goddess Laxmi -

*Muhin Chandaluni Jebe Teki Debi Anna /
Bhojana Karibe Tebe Kaliya Ganjana //*

This was the forceful promise of Goddess Laxmi, who being inspired by Shri Jagannath Conciousness, lead to ruin the proudness and egoism of both Lords, Shri Jagannath and Shri Balabhadra.

In the concluding analysis, it can be said that Shri Jagannath Cult is rich in its own style and not influenced by any other sectarian principle, rather it has influenced other sects and delivered the message of equality, peace, salvation and harmonious feelings for wellbeing of the entire human civilisation.

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Saktism in Purusottama Kshetra

Prabhas Kumar Singh

Puri or Purusottama Kshetra has a great antiquarian value in art, architecture, literature, religion and tradition. For centuries, it has been the principal religious centre of the Hindus; one among the four *Dhams* of Hinduism alongwith Dwarika, Badrinath and Rameswaram. This holy city has been variously referred in ancient Sanskrit texts and *Puranas* as Nilachala, Niladri, Nilagiri, Purusottama Kshetra, Srikshetra and Sankhakshetra. Even in Rig veda, Yogitantra and Kalika Purana, Puri is referred as Purusottama. We find syncreticism of different cults; such as Vaishnavism, Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, Saktism etc. in Jagannath Cult. In the daily rituals and practices of the Jagannath temple, Jaina, Vaishnavite, Buddhist, Saivite, Tantrik influences are found. In the present paper, an attempt has been made to study traces of Saktism in Purusottam Kshetra. Saktism is the worship of Sakti or the female principle-the primary factor in the creation and reproduction of the Universe. Faminine Sakti commands as much respect as does Vishnu or Siva. Saktism is a popular religious cult of the kings and people of Orissa from very ancient time to the modern age. In Sakta literature, Orissa is well known as Odrapitha. The city of Viraja, Ekambra and Puri were notable early *Sakta Pithas* in Orissa as attested from various literary, archaeological as well as folk tradition.

Although Purusottama Kshetra came to be recognised as a great centre of Vaisnavism,

particularly during the reign of Imperial Gangas, it was also a centre of Saktism of India as attested from literature, tradition and archaeological remains. In the tantric lore, Lord Jagannath is considered to be a Bhairava and Vimala is worshipped as Mahadevi. In Devi Bhagavata, Vimala is considered to be a *Kshetra Sakti*. Matsya Purana refers to Purusottama Kshetra as a *Sakta Pitha*, with its presiding goddess Vimala, Vamana Purana refers to Purusottama alongwith Viraja as a sacred pilgrimage centre. Tantric literature *Rudra Yamala* composed in C. 950 A.D., glorifies Jagannatha as adorning the *Mahapitha*. Kalika Purana refers to Odrapitha as a famous *Saktipitha* which was the celebrated seat of goddess Katyayani and God Jagannath. *Tantra Yamala*, another Tantric work refers to Jagannath as the presiding deity of Purusottama Kshetra in Utkala. Vimala has been mentioned as presiding goddess of Purusottama Kshetra in the list of 108 *pithas* found in the *Pranatosini Tantra*. In the puranic list of 108 names of the mother goddess in Namastottara Sata, we come accross the expression "Vimala Purusottama". In the list of *Mahapithas* and *Upapithas* given by the author of *Siva Charita* also we come accross *Nilaparvata* or *Nilachala*, an *upapitha* where Vimala is the presiding Devi and Jagannath is Bhairava. Thus many tantric texts, recognise Puri as *Pada pitha* where the foot portion of the Sati fell at Purusottama Kshetra as per the *Dakshayajna* episode.



If we take into account the recent discovery of the stone images of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra alongwith Daksina Kalika dated to c. 9th century A.D. by scholar Sasanka Sekhar Panda at Tetelkhunti in the district of Balangir, it allures us to conclude that in these forms the Jagannath Triad were worshipped in the upper Mahanadi valley in the 9th century A.D. In the *Mahanirvana Tantra*, Jagannath has been identified with Dakshina Kalika (*Tara Saksyat Sulapani Subhadra Bhubaneswari / Niladrou tu Jagannatha Saksyat Daksina Kalika*).

The worship of holy trinity in Shree Jagannath Temple, represents the inter relation between Vaishnavism and Saktism. Devi Subhadra enshrined between Lord Jagannath and Balabhadra is no other than Ekanamsa, one of the manifestations of Durga or Katyayani. In *Brahama Purana*, Ekanamsa is identified with Katyayani. In *Purusottama Mahatmya* of *Skanda Purana*, Subhadra has been identified as the *Sakti* of Vishnu, Krishna as well as sister of Krishna. It is interesting to note here that Ambika, an aspect of Durga appears first as Rudra's sister and then as consort. So there is some similarity between the cult of Durga and the cult of Subhadra. Devi Subhadra has been regarded as parasakti, Yogamaya, Kampilya vasini, Ekanamsa, Bhubaneswari, Mahalakshmi and also in many other forms of the supreme power of the world. She is worshipped in *Bhubaneswari mantra* (Hrim) which implies that she is the *lipta* (*gnana*) *Sakti* of Lord Jagannath. Learned scholars B.C. Pradhan and Herman Kulke hold the view that the iconography of Subhadra resembles that of the iconography of the Goddess Khambesvari. So Subhadra existed in the Jagannath triad atleast during the Somavamsi period. she was a *Sakta* deity and was adored as Katyayani, Durga and Bhadrakali. The *Sakta* element in Subhadra is well indicated even today. The *Parsva devatas* in Subhadra's chariot are Durga and Chamunda. She is also worshipped

daily in *Bhubaneswari mantra*. Thus it seems that the central placement of Subhadra in the Jagannath triad is an indication of pivotal position of *Sakti* in the great *tantra pitha* of Puri. Learned scholar Sasanka Sekhar Panda has opined that goddess Samalei of Sambalpur is worshipped in the same *Bhubaneswari mantra* as in the case of Subhadra in Sri jagannath temple, Puri. The uniconic form of goddess Samalei like the present anthropoid form of Subhadra seems to be identical. Samalei initially worshipped by the tribals and later absorbed into Hindu fold by the Somavamsis, who were ruling over Orissa from the upper Mahanadi valley from Subharnapura in c.9th-10th century A.D.

The temple of Goddess Vimala, an important *Sakta* shrine is located in the south eastern corner of Lord Jagannath temple. She is also known as Shreekshestrasvari. On examination of ritual pattern connected with Jagannath temple, it is observed that the role of Vimala is more important than that of Lakshmi, because, rituals of Vimala are based on tantric *nities*, where as that of Lakshmi is Vaishnavite in character. *Tantra Chudamani* describe Vimala as Bhairavi and Jagannath as Bhairava. It is pertinent to mention here that the *Bhogas* of Lord Jagannath became *Mahaprasad* after these are offered to Goddess Vimala. Learned Scholar Herman Kulke has drawn our attention to the representation of Jagannath in the form of Ajaikapada Bhairava on a sculptural panel of the temple of Konark. The above quoted literary and sculptural evidences very well indicate that Puri was a centre of Tantric form of Saivism and Saktism where Jagannath was worshipped as Bhairava and Vimala as his *Sakti* (*Odresu Vimala Saktin Jagannathastu Bhairavah*).

The Goddess Vimala is four handed image of chlorite stone, holding *naga keyura* and human figures in the upper hands and kalasa or *Madyapatra* and rosary in lower hands. The



origin of Vimala goes back to much before the emergence of Lord Jagannath in Srikshetra. Noted scholar Dr. H.C. Das has dated the image to Bhaumakara period, when most of the *Sakta tantrik pithas* emerged in Orissa.

Both Vaishnavite and *Sakta* rites are found in the ritual pattern of Vimala. Earlier in the dead of the night of *Vijaya Dasami* of *Dasahara*, animal sacrifice was performed. Later on this practice was stopped with the imposition of Vaishnavite rites. The tantric rites of *Dakshinachara*, *Vamachara* and *Kaulachara* are performed here.

Deep influence of tantric rites can be observed in the *Yantra* of Purusottama. The *Yantra* consists of an eight petalled lotus with the *Vijamantra "klim"* in the centre. The priests of Lord Jagannath temple first propitiate Lord Purusottama with goddess Lakshmi and than worship eight *Saktis* of Vishnu, namely Vimala, Utkarsini, Yajna, Kriya, Yoga, Prathvi, Satya and Isana. Vimala is regarded as one of the eight *Chandis* of Purusottama Kshetra. The other seven *Chandis* are Ramachandi, Herachandi, Baselichandi, Alamchandi, Dakshinachandi and Jhadesvari. In the traditional rites Vimala is invoked as the *Maya sakti* of Jagannath, *Kriya sakti* of Balabhadra and *Ichha sakti* of Subhadra. She is regarded as the consort of Balabhadra.

Durga Madhava Rath Yatra

Every year, the car festival of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra is celebrated with pomp and ceremony in the month of (June and July) at Puri. But few people know about another car festival at Puri that takes place (in the month of September - October, popularly known as Durga Madhav Rath Yatra or Sakta Gundicha Rath Yatra. This festival begins on the 9th day of *Dasahara Puja* and ends on the day of *Dasahara*. The festivals centres round two deities, i.e. Durga, a Sakta deity and Madhava, a Vaishnavite deity. In Purusottama kshetra Lord

Jagannath and Goddess Vimala are regarded as Madhava and Durga respectively. Goddess Durga is worshipped in the inner sanctum of main temple near the Bhandarghar. The deity of Madhava worshipped on the left side of Sri Jagannath on *Ratna Simhasana* in inner sanctum. He is also known as young Purusottama and joins the festival on behalf of Lord Jagannath.

The festival begins with *Sahasra Kumbha Abhiseka*, on the dark fortnight of Aswin. After being permitted by Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath, Goddess Durga comes out to sit on Somanath Mandap to take bath with thousand pots of purified and scented water and then offered Puja. The deity of Madhava also after getting permission from Lord Jagannath, leaves *Ratna Simhasana* and joins Goddess Durga. Both the deities are tied together near the Bhandarghar and after getting permission from Lord Jagannath, they are taken to the temple of Goddess Vimala, who also offered ceremonial bath and *Puja*. On the ninth day of *Dasahara*, both the deities are taken together in a chariot to Narayani temple near Dolamandap Sahi of Puri town. There they offer *puja* and *prasad* and at the night, they returned again to Srimandir. This festival continues for nine days and occupies a prominent place in the twelve festivals of Lord Jagannath.

Since early medieval period, Durga Madhava cult is very popular in Orissa. Madhava is a compound of two words, i.e., *Ma* (Mother) and *Dhava* (Father). So Madhava implies both the combination of Mother (*Sakti*) and Father (*Purusa*). Durga Madhava worship can be found in the Madhavananda temple in the Prachi valley.

Saptamatrikas

Purusottama kshetra as a significant *Saktapitha* for the worship of *Saptamatrikas* is further known from the archaeological evidences. A group of Saptamatrikas, made of chlorite stone is found near the Markandesvar tank at Puri. Here



all the sculptures, except Chamunda are associated with babies. The artist has taken maximum care to depict the celestial smile in the facial expression rather than showing them as war goddess. These *Matrikas* are assigned to the epoch of the Somavamsis. It is the definite evidence to indicate that Puri was well known as a *Saktipitha* by the 9th and 10th centuries A.D. According to *Madalapanji* the *Saptamatrika* temple was constructed by one Bhimakshari of Keshari dynasty.

Varahi Temple

Another early *Sakta* deity 'Varahi' from *Saptamatrika* cult is worshipped at Bali Sahi of Puri town. The image is made of chlorite stone, four handed, holding fish and skull cup in the upper two arms, the lower right arm is in *abhaya* pose and lower left holds a child on her lap. She is worshipped by the Brahmins with non-vegetarian food; particularly fish. The image is very elegantly carved, emitting celestial smile and graceful look. Iconographically the image is dated to Bhaumakara period, i.e. 8th-9th centuries A.D.

The sculpture of Mahisamardini Durga in the *Bhogamandapa* of Jagannath temple further support the theory that Purusottama kshetra is a *Sakta pitha*. The *Sakta* environment of the temple further indicated by the fact that the shrine is said to be protected by *Astasaktis*, namely Sarvamangala, Bhubaneswari, Indrani, Kutamachandi, Chamunda, Durga, Vimala and Lakshmi.

In the early medieval period Saktism, Saivism and Vaisnavism entered into the fold of Jagannath. A later sculptural representation in the *Bhogamandapa* of the Jagannath temple depicts the figure of Siva, Mahisamardini Durga and Jagannath in one panel. In the Draksaram temple Inscription of 1216 A.D. Anangabhima III is described as *Purusottamaputra*, *Rudraputra* and *Durgaputra*. Therefore it is amply suggested that Purusottama, Rudra and Durga were

considered to be identical with Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra respectively. As learnt from Kanchipuram temple inscription, Anangabhima III by 1230 A.D. dropped the epithets *Rudraputra* and *Durgaputra* and described himself only as *Purusottamaputra* and *Parama Vaisnava*. As rightly observed by learned scholar B.C. Pradhan Saktism in Orissa began with the cult of Stambhesvari and was ultimately synthesised in the assimilative character of the Jagannath Cult.

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Ratha Yatra with a Difference

Dr. Pabitra Mohan Nayak

It is quite interesting to note that Maharaja Birmitrodaya Sing Deo in his novel *Nilakuntala* (1927) quotes the authority of *Niladri mahodayah* (1922) dedicated to Niladri Sing Deo (1841-91), Raja of Sonepur, to show the immemorial link of this State with Indradyumna, the legendary king of Avanti. Indradyumna during his historic march to Puri reportedly crossed over from the left to right bank of the Mahanadi and stayed overnight at Subarnapur, overwhelmed by its scenic beauty:

*Avantinagarastheischa chachara nilabhudharam
Uttasam teramasadya nahenadya manoramam
Visramya bhojanadingscha chakruh sarve mudanvitah
Tato mahanadim tirtwa Punya rane provesitah.¹*

Birmitrodaya claim that Prithviraj Chauhan too on his way to Puri stopped over at Subarnapur, enraptured, feasted and fed with its ethereal enchantment.² And Birmitrodaya was no historian. We do not know whether Prithviraj Chauhan during his brief, brave career marked by the blood-red to the land of Lord Jagannath in order to seek His blessings. But we know the highway from Delhi to Puri lay through Suvarnapur.

The Jagannath temple of Savarnapur:

In my book, *Gachhnatale O Gumphabitare*, published by Orissa Book

Stores, Cuttack, I have for the first time, claimed that the original seat of Lord Jagannath was the Sonepur region and Yayati II of Subarnapur



enshrined the Lord in the temple at Puri. I claim to be no historian, either But the recent findings of the store images of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra at Tentelkhunti on the bank of the river Tel (brought to light by Sri Sasanka Sekhar Panda, Joint Director, Public Relations Department, Govt.of Orissa) traceable to the 8th century AD have carried the hypothesis close to history. It has also proved the assumption by the well-known scholar and historian, Padmasri Satyanarayan Rajaguru, that the original images of the Trimurty must have been made of stone. I have appended a list of Jagannath and



Dadhivaman temples to my book on Sonepur and Sri Jagannath to show how such a small place like Suvarnapur could contain so many temples consecrated to the cult of Jagannath. And yet the list is complete.

There is a Jagannath temple in the Rajbhawan dedicated to 'Kotha Jagannath'.² But the main Jagannath temple of the town was set up by Raj Sing Deo (C. 1700-1725), a temple beautiful with its flag flying in the sky" : *ruparuchiram khelatpatakamvaram*.³ It is on this temple which is one of the *Asta Visnu* temples of Suvarnapur that the successive Chauhans paid their attention and concentration. While Prithvi Sing (1786-1841), great grandson of Raj Sing Deo, established the shrines to the Sun-god and to goddess Vimala, Niladri Sing, son to Prithvi Singh set up the Lokanath temple on its precincts. Niladri Sing's daughter-in-law, Rani Amulyamani Devi enshrined the Mahalaxmi temple, and her grandsons, Somabhusan and Sudhansusekhar are associated with the construction of Saraswati temple and Bighneswar temple respectively.

The wooden Snanamandap in front of the temple which caught fire in 1884 was rebuilt by Birmitrodaya Sing Deo (1902-37).⁴ It was here that the new Raja used to wear the royal *pagri* and the Brahmapura, like the Muktimandap of Puri, used to hold its sessions. The resemblance of this Jagannath temple with its counterpart in Srikshetra was complete with the construction of the tall boundary wall comparable to the *Meghanada Prachira* of Puri temple alongwith the four gates in four directions. The wheel had come full circle. It is this Jagannath temple that turns the centre of activities during the Rath yatra.

Ratha yatra at Subarnapur

Just as there is a division of labour among the *Niyogis* or *Sebaiyats* of Puri, there is a *Pataki* system prevalent at Subarnapur which facilitates

the smooth conduct of *Ratha yatra*. The *Badheis* or carpenters construct the *Ratha*, the *Luhuras* or ironsmiths provide the nails, the Maharanas paint the images, the Bhandaris arrange the *tahiyas* (crowns), the goldsmiths wash the gold and silver ornaments, the *dhobis* clean the cloths of the deities, the *Darjees* or tailors stitch the striped wrappings round the Rathas, the *malis* supply flowers, etc. Thus the Ratha yatra is a *ganaparva* or the people's festival.

The stage is set from *Jyestha Sukla Purnima* called *Snana Purnima*. On *Jyestha Sukla chaturdasi* night the *trimurtis* are carried ceremonially to the *Snana mandap*. This is called *chakachhada* (unseating ceremony). There they are bathed, sometimes, with water obtained all the way from river Yamuna. The snana yatra is held in the presence of the Maharaja in the midst of *sankirtana*. From *Krusna Pratipad* or *Amavasya*, there is a fortnight-long silence in the Jagannath temple. This period is known as *Anabasara* when the *darsan* of the *Trimurtis* is forbidden. This is the period of indisposition of the deities, the period of rest and repose when they subsist on drinks called *Anasara pana* only.

Asarh Sukla Pratipad is the day of *Netrotsava*, unlike in Puri where *Netrotsava* is observed on *Amavasya Asarh Amavasya* of 1802 the Marathas had entered the Sonepur fort through the south gate since then known as 'Chandal Bhadi' and got Rajaprithvi Sing arrested. This day is, therefore, considered inauspicious. *Netrotsava* is also known as the occasion for the renewal of youth of the deities or *Navayauvana*. The Raj Panigrahi offers the sacred thread and the Mahalik offers upan bhoga to the deities on behalf of the keots and receives a lat (a piece of cloth) from the hands of the Maharaja. The Maharana also gets a lat for painting the images.



Asarh Sukla Dwitiya is the day of Ratha yatra. Unlike in Puri, here are two chariots in which the three deities are seated. Every year a new chariot is made for Lord Jagannath. The old one is meant for Balabhadra and Subhadra. Two small chariots are also made for Kotha Jagannath. Only after the chariots of Kotha Jagannath are drawn by the *Bhiritias* from the Rajbhawan to the gate of the garh and back does the pahandi ceremony from the Jagannath temple start.

The *pahandi* of Sri Baladev and Subhadra is performed by the Brahmins of Barbazar while that of Sri Jagannath is jointly conducted by the Brahmins of Ghodaghatpra and Garhvitara in the midst of recitations from *Bidagdha*, *Chintamani* and *Mathuramangala* to the rhythmic sound of gongs and trumpets and conchshells. The pahandi is accompanied by groups of *Samkirtana* and the cacophony of drums and cymbals and human voices fills the air. The gun booms. The cannon roars.

The Rajpurohit performs the puja from the gate of the temple to the gate of the garh which is a furlong away *upan bhoga* is offered by the Rajbhawan and the Gopalji *Math* which goes to the *Bhiritias*. The bhoga offered in the chariot goes to the *Badheis* and *Kalapithias* of keot caste. Here the chariot of Lord Dadhivaman of Ghodaghatpara stands ready. The Mahalik, the Badhei, the chaprasi, the dhobi and the mali receive lats from the Rajas. The Raja like his counterpart of Puri performs the *chandanchhera* after which the three chariots are drawn. The chariot of Lord Dadhivaman stops that evening at Ramji temple of Majhipara which is its terminal point, while the other two chariots take a couple of days to reach their destination. While the *Baradanda* of Puri runs straight to the Gundicha temple, here it runs from the Rajbhawan via Majhipara and Barbazar on a semi-circular.

Trajectory one of the significant distinctions of the Suvarnapur Ratha yatra is the *Dwadasvatara* or twelve incarnations the deities assume during this yatra : Machha and Kachha on *Trutiya*, Varaha and Nrusimha on *Chaturthi*, Rama and Balarama on Panchami, Bamana and Parsurama on *Sasthi*, Kaliyadalana on *Saptami*, Padmamukha on *Astami* and Kalki on Navami. The *avatara* of Buddha stands significantly omitted. *Asarh Krushna Panchami* is called *Hera Panchami* when the *Vijaya Pratimas* of goddess Mahalaxmi and goddess Saraswati are carried from the Jagannath temple to the house of Rajpanigrahi - a custom unique in Orissa. To this place the Maharaj himself comes down to pay his *darsan* to the deities. Herefrom they are carried in the night to Gundicha mandap and back. After the formal *vachanika* or dialogue where through goddess Mahalaxmi's displeasure at the delay of Lord Jagannath's return is articulated, too through what is called 'Rathabhanga' the symbolic breaking of the chariot of Lord Jagannath, Goddess Mahalaxmi returns.

The *Saptami* day is the day for *Ratha Leuta*, turning the chariots back. This is done by the people of Keot, Gingra, Bhulia and Dhivara caste. Special *upan bhogas* are offered by the yuvaraj, the Maharani and the Maharaja on the third, eighth and ninth day of the bright fortnight of *Asarh*. From the second to the ninth day 108 rounds of *Vishnu Sahasra Nama* chanted.

The Bahuda yatra begins on *Asarh Sukla Dasami*, and *upan bhog* is offered by the Keots of Lankabahal before the deities leave Gundicha Mandap on their return journey to Jagannath temple. It may be mentioned here that the Gundicha temple of Suvarnapur located in Barbazar plays a crucial role during the Ratha Yatra. This temple was built by Rani Gundicaha Devi, mother of Raja Niladhar Sing Deo whose



birth on the Ramanavami day of 1837 it commemorates. The Rani spent around Rs.12,000/- and the temple, the tallest in west Orissa, took around 20 years to complete. Like its counterpart, the Gundicha temple of Puri attributed to another Rani Gundicha Devi of the Gajapati, it had a wooden Nrusimha image which was subsequently substituted by a massive bran image of Lord Laxmi-Nrusimha installed by Rajarsi Prataprudra, grandson of Gundicha Devi. About 90 feet in height, this tallest monument of Subarnapur represents the last flicker of the Chauhan's architectural glory.

The Ratha Yatra is great festival at Subarnapur. Children put on new clothes and gifts of money are exchanged between families for *Khajakhia* (taking sweets). Babies in new clothes carried by parents are made to touch the chariots, which is called *Rathachhuan*. Not only in the capital town, but also at Menda, Khandahata, Paligan, Kartang, Mursundhdi, Suballaya, Bagbar, Kamalpur, Pitamahul, Kobsamalai, Lachhipur, Binka, Tarabha etc.. This festival is held with fervour and to all these places, provisions for the gods called *Pahur* (*Upahar*) or *Upan* (*Upayana*) are spent by the Rajbhawan of all these, the Tarbha Ratha Yatra occupies a pride of place, it is believed that those who are too exhausted to cover the long distance to Puri are directed in their dreams to witness the Tarbha Ratha Yatra, instead :

*Yo viswasya samastakarya karane daksha
dadhivamarah*

*Yanmahatmya marekshitum vahujana ayanti
duattatah.*

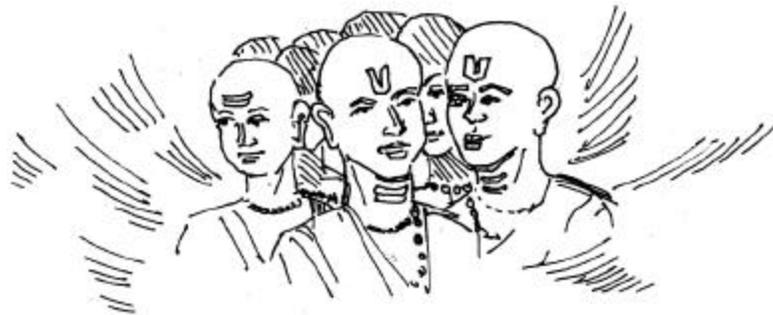
*Asadhasya site dwitiya divase tisthan rathe madhavah
Gachchhan rajapathe avyadhachcha taraabha grame
subham gundicham.*

Thus for the famous Ratha yatra of Puri, Tarbha Ratha Yatra visited by the people from Patna, Kalahandi, Kahariar, Bargarh, Rairakhol, Boudh, Kanker, Kashipur, Barhampur, Ganjam, Manjusa etc. is considered a convenient substitute.

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Sri Jagannath Culture in Yogic Ethics

Dr. Ramakanta Kar

Indian yogic system has reached its culmination in the unique culture of Lord Jagannath and this in its turn is rooted in what may be called as Purusottama consciousness otherwise known as Sri Jagannath consciousness. Sri Jagannath cult comprehends everything divine and transcends all barriers of caste, creed, colour, religion and race just as the oceanic tradition of Indian yogic culture. Although the devotees belong to different religious disciplines and follow their typical ecclesiastical practices : Sri Jagannath cult promises them all a shadow of religious cover under all embracing nomenclatures of *Purusottama*, *Parambrahma* and *Paramatma*.

In the temple of Puri, Lord Jagannath is worshipped as Lord Vishnu, the remover of sins and giver of *Mukti* or salvation. So Lord is worshipped as Yogiraj and He is seated on *Ratnasinhasana* in *samadhi* stage like Buddha. Lord Jagannath symbolises *Paramatma* (The Supreme) and His devotees are symbolised as *Jivatma* (self). So the union of Lord Jagannath and His devotees in the ideal state of highest realization. In *Yogasatra*, the definition of *yoga* is mentioned as : "*Jivatmaparmatmanoh Sanjogah yoga ityuchyate.*"

In the *Patanjali Yosasutram*, yogi Maharshi Patanjali has defined as "*Yogaschittabruttinirodhah*" which means yoga is the process which keeps the mind quiet,

thoughtless and silent, Yoga teaches us how to keep the instruments of the soul that is physique and the vital to be strong, healthy and affective. Natural body can be kept by natural process, which is the fundamental base of Indian yoga. This is the age old realized truth of our Indian yogic culture. Sri Jagannath culture also contains every aspects of this yogic ethics in its fold. So an aspiration of Sri Jagannath culture can get every benefit of the greatest yogic culture of Indian soil. In the temple of the Lord, *Tulasi Prasada* if taken in empty stomach, can cure tonsil, cold and Asthma etc. and also works as a strong preventive for different diseases. *Arati* of the Lord helps for proper digestion of devotees. The bathing water of Garuda, the vehicle (*vahana*) of Lord Vishnu, (symbolised by a pillar in the Jagamohan) works as a medicinal dose for the fever. *Chandana* (Sandal) in the temple cures small pox, measles etc. These are the natural treatments granted to the devotees of the Lord. Meditation in *yoga* gives mental peace, mental wisdom, mental concentration when a devotee sits on *Nishatala*, a place in front of the temple of Sri Sakhigopal in the Srimandira premises, where open air of the environment touches the body of the devotees, when a devotee compares between the Satwik customs and necked amorous postures (Mithunamurti) carved and fitted on the body of the temple. At that time his mind completely achieves Satwik thoughts and filled with divine



realisation. These erotic sculptures also symbolize the world of virtues and vices. It is necessary to know what is the *Apara* world of *Maya* and *Satwik*, *Rajasika* and *Tamasika* beings and the *trigunatita* of Supreme consciousness. This is also a yogic method, which is an ideal and scientific method to understand the illusion of the world and to know the highest world of cosmic consciousness. It is called the life of devotion or Bhakti Yoga.

Sri Jagannath cult teaches us to be free from all attachments and greed for food and the Lord being served 56 *pauties* of *Bhogas*, does not keep himself attached to any such material objects of enjoyment. He is *Bhabagrahi* not *Bastugrahi* as He has tight-lipped and closed mouth. This is the example of complete dedication and a part of Yogic activities. The big and opened round eyes of the Lord speaks to the world that he grants Abhaya to save the world and the devotees through perfect *Laya Yoga*, thus the Lord teaches us to remain in such a conscious state throughout day and night.

Sri Jagannath is the *Pranava Omkar Purusha*. Pranava is a set of five elements as *Dandakam*, *Kunadali*, *Tarakam*, *Ardhamatra* and *Vindu*. These five elements are imagined as Sri Jagannath, Sri Balabhadra, Mother Subhadra, Sri Sudarsana and Ratnasinhasana respectively. *Omkar* signifies a set of three main elements such as A, U & M. These three elements represent the names of the Holy Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. So it is mentioned in Sanskrit Shastras : "*Akare liyate Brahma Ukare liyate Harih Makare liyate Rudra Pranava tu Prakashyate*".

A means lower region (Brahma or Subhadra), U means higher region or heaven (Vishnu or Sri Jagannath) and M means middle region or earth (Shiva or Balabhadra). Subhadra is a power *Paramatma* or Sri Jagannath, who

unite *Jiva* on earth or middle region with *Param* (Sri Jagannath). So Subhadra is called *Yogamaya*. From the lower region Subhadra awakes *Kundalini* in sleeping position on *Muladhara Chakra* on the earth and on the head of Balabhadra towards the state of heaven (*Sahasrara*) or Sri Jagannath, there is the state of salvation. So Sriksetra or Land of Lord is sacred and is the land of *Paritrana* or emancipation. In Yogic Shastra when *Kundalini Shakti* (Serpetine Power) of a human being leads towards "*Sahasrara*" (State of heaven), then the person become super conscious if it is activated through practice or *Sadhana*. In our body, there are three main nerves called as IDA, Pingala, Sushumna many other sharp nerves are functioning in our astral body. When *Kundalini Shakti* (Cerebro-spinal-fluid) rises and leads towards *Sahasrara* (The Pineal Gland), then the divine power of that person is developed and he becomes cosmic conscious and at tains salvation. "*Idarupi Jagannathah Balabhadrastu Pingala Sushumna Subhadra Mata Yogamaya Prakirtita*"

Infinite energy is at the disposal of men if he knows how to get it and this is a part of the science of Yoga. The sacred land, where there are faculties to unite self with the Supreme and devotee with the Lord and where there are images of Sri Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra to pour influence of their own ideology on the millions of their devotees, that land is called as Srikshetra or Yogapitha. So Sri Jagannath is the Supreme and His land is super and sacred, a paradise of beauty, a heaven of peace and tranquility.

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Lord Jagannath in the Form of Lord Raghunath and Lord Jadunath

Tarakanta Mohanty

Lord Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe has fulfilled the desires of devotees who in different ages had throng Puri to personally behold him in the form and shape of their own admired and adorned presiding deities. Take for instance, Ganapati Bhatta of Maharashtra whose own presiding adorned deity was Lord Ganesh during his visit to Puri desired to see Lord Jagannath in the form of Lord Ganesh. Lord Jagannath had fulfilled the devotee's desire and gave him Darshana in the Snana Mandap on the day of Snana Purnima in the attire of Lord Ganesh.

It is Adi Jagadguru Sankaracharya at the first Darshan of Lord Jagannath at Puri had recited songs glorifying Lord Jagannath, which is best known and popular titled 'Shree Shree Jagannath Satkam' written and recited in Sanskrit language.

It begins :

'Kadachit Kalindtata Bipin - Sangeeti Kabaro Mudaviri-Nari-Badana Kamal Swada-Madhupah

Rama-Shambhu-Brahma Surapat Ganesha Jagannath Wami Nayan Patha Gami Bhatume(1)

Meaning : "Once you appeared in the woods on the banks of Kalindi dancing to the tune of the sweet concert. Seeking nectar from the lotus faces of cowherd women. Your feet adored by Laxmi, Shiva, Indra and Ganesh. O Lord, The Master of the Universe, Thou appear in my vision.



It was Jaban poet Salabega an ardent devotee of Lord Krishna had seen Krishna in Lord Jagannath and has written and recited many Bhajans and Janans on him. Sri Jagannath is

adorned in different attires basing upon Lilas-of Lord Krishna. These Veshas are Kaliya Dalan Vesha performed in Bhadra Krishna Ekadasi, Pralmasura Badha Vesha in Bhadra Krishna Dwadasi, Krishna Balaram Vesha in Bhadra Krishna Trayodasi, Radha Damodar Vesha from the month of Asunya Sukla Dasami to Kartika Sukla Dasami, Chacheri Vesha from Falgun Sukla Nabami to the end of Falguna Purnima. Lord Jagannath is a mysterious God. The Krishna



devotees opined that Lord Jagannath is Lord Krishna. In the month of August-September (Bhadrab) Krushna Janmastami is celebrated in Srimandir and in the month of October-November (Kartika) Kartika Brata and Rasa Purnima are celebrated in Srimandir. There is a legend behind Sri Krishna's last rites that when Lord Krishna was shoot by Jarasabar's arrow and when he left his body for cremation all the limbs of Lord Krishna were burnt and the *Navi* portion could not be burnt. There are *sunyabani* (unseen sky words) that you throw it in the ocean. It is believed that the unburnt *Navi* of Lord Krishna has been kept inside the *Daru* Bigraha and it is replaced in the new *Daru* when Nabakalebara of Lord Jagannath is performed. Lord Balaram was Lord Krishna's eldest brother and Goddess Subhadra is his sister and even in this iron age (Kaliyuga) the three deities are worshiped in the sacred sanctum which is known as gem-thrown or Ratna Singhasan. So Jadunath of dwapar age is none else than Lord Jagannath.

Lord Raghunath is also Lord Jagannath. There is a legend behind it. When Santha Tulasi Das of 16th century after performing his holly journey to Prayag, Mathura and Kanchi had arrived Puri. Santha Tulasi Das had his pious desire that he will behold Lord Jagannath as Lord Raghunath. But when he entered the temple, he only saw that Lord Raghunath or Ram, Laxman and Sita are not seated in the holly sanctum and Lord Ram and Lord Laxmi have no arrows in their shoulders. He could not see in his own eye the Raghunath Vasha of Lord Jagannath and opined that Lord Jagannath is not Lord Raghunath. He then promised to leave Puri and not to take food and water until and unless he beholds his own adorned presiding deity Lord Raghunath. He left Puri and spent at Tulasichaura of Malatipatapur village adjacent to Puri. In the meanwhile, a boy with some Mahaprasad

requested Santha Tulasi Das to eat something and drink water fetched by him. Tulasi denied. When he enquired about such attitude Santha Tulasi Das replied that unless and until he beholds in his own eye Lord Raghunath, he will not take anything or drink water. The boy then asked, did not behold Lord Raghunath in Lord Jagannath ? He said that Jagannath has got no foot, no ear and no hand and how can he worship and take granted as my beloved Lord Raghunath. Then the boy hinted that he is an author of Ram Charita Manas and he is known as Rambola and in his Ram Charit Manas he has written about the God that "*Bina pada, Chalu, Bina Kana Suna, Bina Kara Karama Karjana.*" Meaning that God or Param Brahma walks without foot, ears and performs Karma without the hand. Then Santha Tulasi Das was astonished that how can this boy is of a tender age could know about these spiritual things. The *jeeva* performs Karma and Lord Jagannath who is param Brahma does not perform any Karma as he is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. He can work without foot, can hear without ear can perform Karma without hand and that is the greatness of Lord Jagannath. Then Tulasi Das with the boy went from Malatipatpur to Puri temple and the boy soon vanished in the temple and Santha Tulasi Das could see in the sacred sanctum the Veshas of Lord Raghunath, Goddess Sita and Lord Laxman and at last admitted that he has seen his own Raghunath in Lord Jagannath. So it is said that Lord Raghunath and Jadunath are also Lord Jagannath. So from time immemorial devotees of Ram Cult and Krushna cult visit Lord Jagannath Here lies the greatness of Lord Jagannath.

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Archaeological Remains Within Mathas in Puri

Dr. Prafulla Kumar Ratha

Mathas in Puri are store-well of archaeological remains. These representations can be broadly divided into two categories such as (i) images of enshrined deities and deified preceptors and (ii) decorative motifs on *matha* temples and residential structures. All these, of course, cannot be dated alongwith the inception or establishment of the monasteries as stone-works have been added from time to time. Even magnificent works have been undertaken during the last hundred years. For example Venkatachari Matha has got its main entrance built recently with high-class scroll works and sculptural representations. Images of Laksmi and Saraswati with another pair of images of the same goddesses with variations present magnificent artistic look to the door way. Similarly ornamented work at the temple door in the Gangamata Matha is a recent one. Modern masonry materials like glazed tiles and marbles have also been extensively utilized in many mathas of which Radha Kanta *matha* is a glaring example. Also *mathas* have many old mural paintings, which can be studied before these completely fade away or damaged.

The enshrined images both of the deities and deified saints are built in stone, metal and wood. In some cases historical legends are associated with these images indicating their origin and greatness. The stone image of Krushna in the

Radhakanta matha is said to have been brought from Kanchi by Purusottama Deva of Surya dynasty. It was first installed within the great temple and subsequently handed over to Kasi Mishra, must be during the kingship of Prataprudra. It is quite interesting to note that two Krushna images said to be brought from Kanchi by one king and installed in the great temple were later shifted to two new sites by the succeeding king in subsequent period specially when Krushnite Vaisnavism flourished. One was shifted to a temple built at a place almost 20kms away from Puri. The place became known as Satyavadi after this reinstallment, meaning he who tells truth, and now called Sakhigopala, Gopal who is a witness. Due to presence of a highpillar, like the Aruna Stambha standing in front of the main entrance of Jagannath temple brought from the dilapidated Konark temple during Marahatta rule, the temple at Satyavadi can be dated to the post atleast late Marahatta period, implying thereby the shifting to have occurred in the recent past, but positively before 1800A.D. The second Krushna image was handed over to a Brahmana to be worshipped as his family deity. It is learnt from the Vaisnavas in Radhakanta Matha that by the time Chaitanya started staying in Kasi Mishra's house the deity was already under worship. This may be a historical truth but cannot be easily believed. The king Purusottama Deva might have brought some



images from kanchi, including a Ganesha image with peculiar representations, still enshrined within the great temple. Then why only the Krishna images were displaced that too one to a temple and another to an individual ? The status of this individual alongwith his relationship with the king and his court indicates the transfer to be an improbability. Kasi Mishra was a kinsman of one Godavara Mishra, who became the second Rajaguru diminishing the dominance of Kavi Dindima Jivadevacharya of the famous Vatsasa family, the traditional Rajagurus of the kings. This change of portfolio must have caused mixed reaction among the conscious citizens of the period. Under such condition thus mixed reaction among the conscious citizens of the period. Under such condition thus inferred it would have been an action of bitter criticism on the part of Kasi Mishra, an ambitious Brahmana, to have accepted Krishna image to be worshipped as family deity. His stay at Puri indicates that he found the place safe being far away from the state-capital may be to avoid caustic criticism aimed at his family over the issue of appointment of a second Rajaguru from nonVatsana family. Be that what it may be image is installed on a pedestal in the Radhakanta Matha where public access is forbidden and hence iconographic study could not made. The pedestal has undergone complete transformation. Only a small stone panel of yester years depicting the episode of Krishna lifting the Govardhana hill is left unchanged.

There are many stone images of Hanumana enshrined in various mathas belonging to both Ramanandi and non-Ramanandi sects. For example there are three such images in Odiya matha. One of these images is in a tiny temple at the entrance of the matha said to have been installed a century ago. The second one, which is equally magnificent as the first one, is fitted to the wall in the courtyard where stands the matha

temple. This one has sculptural variations from the former. The third one, a very small image now almost indistinct under thick coat of vermillion is fitted to the temple wall in its north western corner. There is one Hanumana figure at the entrance of Gangamata Matha. So also one Hunumana image is kept in a niche, named as Bhutagada Mahavir, at the entrance of Radhakanta Matha. But this image has been placed by one local resident named Babaji Sahu hardly a few years ago. Similarly a Hanumana image is kept in Kavir Choura by one unknown ascetic who took shelter here is the recent past. Thus Hanumana images though form a special group of sculptural representation and subject of iconographic analysis are of much recent origin in non-Ramanandi mathas.

A Vishnu image found placed in the Vasudev Ramanuja Matha, situated in front of Venkatachari Matha, was brought here and enshrined in 1935 A.D. by one Maharaja Samarendra of Bhawani Pur, Kolkata who found the image from an old tank in the village Baghawani Pur, Kolkata who found the image from an old tank in the village Baghawada (Tripura). Similarly one will come across many images in various mathas and temple brought and enshrined by pilgrims who have found those in their native places.

Besides each matha has their presiding deities belonging to various cults. There are Nrusimha images in Sankarananda, Mahiprakasa, Dakhina Parsva, Siddhavakila and Narasimhachari Mathas. These images are worshipped as presiding deities. The Nrusimha image in Pandu Ashrama is of rare design where the deity is eight armed. The intestine of the demon Hiranya Kasipu is seen held in two uppermost hands, Hands below these are seen holding disc and conch, the attributes of Vishnu. The next pair of hand are engaged in tearing open the chest of



the demon. The lower most hands are holding the legs of the demon tightly and the head firmly. Image of Ugrasena in Bhṛugu Ashrama is a rare specimen. The four-armed Gopaljew image in Jagannatha Ballabha Matha is really an image of Krushna- Vishnu. This concept is said to have evolved in the line of Harihara or Ardha Nariswara. Radha Krushna, Sita Rama, Raghunathajew images are extant in various mathas. Even there are instances of various deities being worshipped in the uniconical form of Salagrama. Lakshmi-Nrusimha in Rewasa matha and Viswambhara Raghunatha in Sanajhadu Matha are examples of such worships. Thus both stone and metal images present in these mathas are a big hoard of icons which need independent study.

The other category of decorative motives that contribute their major share to the archaeological remains of these mathas are the door lintels, which contain Navagrahas and specially those mathas which are established in 16th century have door lintels with more than nine figures. There are 13 figures in the door lintel fitted to the temple in Bada Odiya matha and 11 figures in Kavir Chaura. In Kavir Chaura, nine figures are flanked by two similar figures with their arms raised upward as if lifting some heavy material. Both the figures are in sitting position, one leg crossed horizontally and another closed vertically being in erected pose. All other two armed figures are sitting in Padmasana. The sixth figure is holding a mace in right hand and details of the left one cannot be identified. The seventh figure is having beard and displaying Varada Mudra in one hand, the other one is not clear. The figure in 8th position is holding two swords in two hands. The 9th figure may be Rahu looks like the figure of Jagannath holding a bow in his left hand and may be an arrow in the right hand. This image is having a crown. The 10th figure is holding a pitcher in his left as

ketu holding a mace in their left lower hands resting on ground, conch and disc in both the upper hands.

Wooden Images:- The galaxy of wooden images in various mathas can be classified as (i) images of Jagannath cult, (ii) images of cultic deities and (iii) images of deified preceptors and saints. Barring a few almost all mathas have enshrined wooden images belonging to Jagannath cult either as single Patita Pavana or Trimurti or Chaturdha Murti. In Sankarananda, Gopal Tirtha, Sivatirtha, Mahiprakash, Emara Jiyaraswamy, Narasinghachari, papudia, Chhauni, Chaulia, Nevala Das, Surangi, Radhakanta and Odiya mathas etc. have the wooden Patita Pavana images enshrined as Parsvadevata. Hati Akhada, Mangu and Bauli mathas are some where Patita Pavana is the presiding deity. In Ramji matha belonging to Nimbarka sect and Jagat Mohini of Goudiya faith Patita Pavana Jagannatha, is under worship as the presiding deity along with Radhasagar Gopal and Krushna-Balarama respectively. So also wooden images of holy triad or Chaturdha Murti are enshrined in mathas such as Govardhana, Raghava Dasa, Jagannatha Ballabha, Bada Santha, Bada Chhata, Sana Chhata, Trimili, Kunja Katak, Haridasa Samadhi, Siddha Vakula and Ayodhya Dasa etc. Vidura matha is an exception in two ways. First Vidura's stone image is worshipped in this monastery as the presiding deity. Secondly there is one set of triad and one set of Chaturdha Jagannatha images built in wood enshrined within the matha. After the precious metal image stolen, Bhuvanewari the presiding deity of Gopal Tirtha matha is worshipped through her wooden image is also very significant.

Six Radhakrushna images in Gangamata mathas are all made of wood. The most significant is that images of preceptors are generally wooden specially belonging to post 16th century. Of



course there are stone images of Sri Chandji in Mangu and Bauli Matha, of Jagannatha Dasa in Odiya and Sata-lahadi matha. Images of Ramanuja are built either in stone or in metal. Radhakanta Matha has quite a good number of wooden images of Pournamasi, Lalita, Visakha, Adwita, Nityananada and Gopala. Guru, Astabhuja Jagannatha Dasa and Sadabhuja Gouranga images in the Odiya Matha are wooden. Though later devotees of both Chaitanya and Jagannatha Dasa have successfully established amicable relationship between profunder and propagators of tenets of both the faiths. Had it not been so two more hands would not have been added to the image of Jagannatha Dasa. In most of the works relating to Chaitanya and Jagannatha Dasha's relation the latter is said to be representing the Radha aspect. Why then in the 8 armed image. Jagannatha Dash is shown as Krushna ? This may be for all probabilities due to inter-faith tension.

Sadabhuja Gouranga that is six armed Chaitanya image in Gangamata Matha shown as axe and Kamandalu (water pot) being held both the lowest hands said to be representing Chaitanya, the Dandi Sannyasi. But the presence of axe clearly denotes the images to be an unified form of Rama, Krushna and Parsurama three anthropomorphic incarnations of Vishnu.

Images of Adwita, Nityananda and Gouranga extent in Surangi and Haridasa Samadhi are all made of wood. From all such images one important fact that comes to light is that in the past preceptors and saints were given iconographic forms mainly in wood, as a traditional practice and part of deep-rooted tradition of worshipping the ancestors of predecessors. Thus wooden deities enshrined in the great temple can be discussed in the line of same tradition. May be the venerated gods whom now crores of devotees are praying and

worshipping were having their origin in such a primary stage when wooden images of ancient saints, whose identities are lost due to interpolation of Vishnu, Krushna, Rama, Siva, Bhairava and Kalika etc. by various theological thinkers of subsequent period according to dominance of respective cults.

Iconographic representations of deceased saints along with presence of Samadhis with their relics are conclusive testimony of predominance of ancestral worship among the mendicants belonging to various faiths and cults. Birth-days and Death-days of these saints are regularity observed. In the Emara matha a small image of Ramanuja is under worship along with the beggar prototype which can be easily moved for meeting necessities. In all the temples one will find the presence of a movable image to be carried on journey festivals. In case of Ramanuja the same style is followed. This movable image is taken on tour to various other Mathas in the month of Vaisakha and the occasion continues for ten days. Probably this system has been evolved in the line of famous Rath Yatra of Jagannatha, the presiding deity of this temple town. Astonishingly there is similarity between Ratha Yatra and tour of Ramanuja as both are celebrated for ten days. Thus the archaeological study along with analysis of matha ritual will testify the predominance of the ancestral worship and deification of preceptors.

It may not be inappropriate to mention that in some mathas foot prints said to be of the profunder of the faiths are under worship. Kavir Chaura is an example where a pair of foot prints carved on a block of stone is under worship. Worshipping footprints of Vishnu is an old tradition. In many matha temples footprints of Chaitanya are being worshipped. Footprints of Chaitanya are also enshrined within the great temple. In some mathas wooden foot-wears of the profunder are



under worship. All these prove that ancestral worship is an important undercurrent in Indian religious activities.

Wooden decorative motifs displaying master craftsmanship of local carpenters are in no way insignificant. Though woodcrafts of much antiquity are not available yet these exhibit artistic splendour belonging to last two hundred years. These motifs are largely found on doors and windows of these monasteries. Odishan windows are devoid of railings and shutters. Therefore various puranic and epic episodes such as Krishna taking away the clothes of bathing Gopis, lifting Govardhanas representations. This trend can not be said to have its origin with all definiteness in post 16th century Chaitanya movement or earlier when dominant was the influence of Bhagavata. Artistic representation of Navagunjara and various geometric diagrams are also found nicely carved on windows. Doors of ancient structures are also well ornamented by art works which enhance beauty in one hand and strength of the shutters in the other.

There are Jhulana Mandapas that is the platform to observe the amorous sports of Krishna and Radha along with a few Vaishnavite images in the Sankarananda and Gopala Tirtha

Mathas. From this it can be conclusively said these two mathas belonging to Sankara sect and believing in pure monism have compromised with the flourishing dualism of Radha Krishna cult, which gained ground in the 16th century A.D. in the Radhakanta Matha a metal image of Lakshmi highing one and half feet is enshrined near the Patita Pavana image decisively indicating Jagannatha to be Vishnu. But theologically the Vaishnavas of Radhakanta matha regard Jagannath to be Krishna, the paramount Purusha (male partner) in the philosophy of love. This is another example of cultic synthesis. Many such examples can be listed from which it will be seen that these religious institutions have been lenient to other faiths and theologies and there by a synthesis has been achieved which is the quaint essence of the Jagannath cult.

Thus independent study for proper and detailed assessment of contribution of these institutions in development of the Jagannath cult and the cultural synthesis attained thereby is warranted.

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The Cult of Lord Jagannath and its Impact on Oriya Literature

Indu Bhusan Kar

*"I ask not anything from you
O Jagannath, ask not for wealth or woman
But beg for small measure of Saradha Sands"*

Salabeg

Shri Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe is the presiding deity of Puri Jagannath temple which was constructed during the reign of Ananta Varma Chodagangadev (1078-1147 A.D.) of Ganga dynasty. If we trace the evolution of the Jagannath Consciousness, we find that Jagannath was originally the God of the *Sabara* - the aboriginal tribe. Lord Jagannath was treated as *Daru Devata (Daru Brahma)*. Later on, the Jagannath Deity was established by the King of Orissa and worshipped as Lord of Universe. Many saints of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain philosophy even Muslim devotees found, their divine aspirations and dreams realized in the Jagannath cult. In Jagannath cult, we find the true manifestation of syncretic culture that is "unity in the diversity" which is a salient feature of Indian culture. Thus the cult of Jagannath took all-pervasive form, and assimilated various religious faiths like Saivism, Saktism, Vaishnavism, Jainism and Buddhism. The three images of Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra according to research scholars, represent the earliest religious Jain faith of Trinity - *Samyak Jnana, Samyak Charita* and *Samyak Drusti*. Some other scholars opined that these three images represent Buddhist triad of Budha, Darma and Sangha.

Shankaracharya, one of the greatest saints of Hindu religion (788-822 AD) came to Puri and stayed there. He worshipped Lord Jagannath as Master of Universe. He composed heart-touching devotional song in Sanskrit titled - "*Jagannath Astakam*". The English version of 1st Stanza of this *Jagannath Astakam* - eulogizes Jagannath as Sree Krushna - The Master of Universe. His prayer begins - thus

*"Once you appeared in the woods.
On the banks of Kalindi
Dancing to the tune of the sweet consort
seeking nectar from the lotus faces of cowherd women.
Laxmi, Siva, Indra & Ganesh
O Lord, the Master of the Universe appear in my vision".*

After Shankaracharya, many other religious saints such as Ramanuja, Chaitanya, Nimbark and Nanaka visited Puri and worshipped Lord Jagannath as God - (*Param Brahma*). Jayadev the follower and devotee of Nimbark sect and a celebrated saint poet of 12th Century who wrote *Gitagovinda* worshipped Lord Jagannath as Radhamadhab. Puri has been long since been treated as one of the *Chaturdham* - a sacred place of pilgrimage.

Sri Rama Krishna Paramhansa, the most honoured saint of India opined that Lord Jagannath is true Pantheon God - Epitome of "*Sarba Dharma Samnvaya*" The Cult of Jagannath has in course of time, faced all religious challenges and survived. It instilled ideals of religious fraternity, equality and universal



brotherhood among the millions and millions of devotees all over world. This is the oldest popular religious cult in Orissa. German scholars A. Eschmann, Dr. Herman Kulke and B.C. Tripathy, Director of Ganganath Jha Institute, Allahabad, had written jointly a well - documented book on evolution of Jagannath Icon titled "The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Orissa". They have opined that Narasingha worship was the earlier form, worshipped mostly by Adivasis and gradually accepted by the kings of Orissa, even though some of them were Shaivites. The evidence of this evolutionary stage of iconography is found in the premises of Jagannath temple. The icon Nrusingha has been installed with Trisula of Shiva. In Orissa, well known research scholars like Dr. Beni Madhav Padhi, the author of "*Daru Debata*" and Dr. K.C. Misra, the author the "*The Cult of Jagannath*" have brought to light the genesis and ideal philosophy of syncretism of Oriya culture in their books.

It is heartening to note that, this all-pervading cult of Jagannath has greatly influenced all aspects of Oriya life and culture - Art, Dance, Drama, Music, Literature and Religion. Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab a great patriot, statesman, historian and writer aptly opined. "The Oriya society is the epitome of the Indian society. It has shown the most concrete way of syncretism to meet challenges. It was fortunate for the Oriya society to have Jagannath enshrined as political oneness for the state and religion was moving hand in hand, is those ages". ("This is cult of Jagannath" - an essay by Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab - published in "Image in Culture and Literature" 1977).

Oriya literature, beginning from the age of Sarala Dasa of 15th century to the 20th century, spanning nearly five hundred years has greatly been influenced by the consciousness of Lord

Jagannath. It is to be admitted that this Jagannath consciousness is ingrained in the minds of art loving Oriyas. That is why this land of Lord Jagannath though poor in economic wealth has been regarded as a peaceful holy land, free of violent communal clash and religious conflicts unlike other neighboring states. The cult of Jagannath has taught us religious tolerances and universal brotherhood. Our ancient as well modern literature, which have imbibed the great ideals of Jagannath cult of equality, fraternity and brotherhood have enriched Oriyas spiritual life and culture.

Impact of Cult of Jagannath on Oriya Literature :

If we survey the ancient and medieval Oriya literary works, we find innumerable instances and references of Lord Jagannath and His legends and glories. We get some references and rituals of worship of Lord Jagannath in *Madala Panji* (Drum-Chronicle of palm leaf manuscripts) supposed to have been started at the command of the first king of the Ganga-dynasty, Chodaganga Dev some time in the 11th - 12th century A.D.

Sarala Dasa, the saint poet of Oriya epic Mahabharat during the reign of Kapilendra Dev of 15th Century, first eulogized and prayed Lord Jagannath as "Srikrushna". This is found in every chapter of his epic work. He also adored Lord Jagannath as "Budha Avatara" in *Madhya Parva* of his *Oriya Mahabharat*. He has expressed his devotion to Lord Jagannath as follows :

*Bandai Sree Jaganath Baikuntha Nivas
Boudha rupe Nilagiri sikhe Achhibasi
Balabhadra Subhadra Sahite
Charirupe Bije Nilasundara Parvate*

(Mahabharat, Madhya Parva)

After Sarala Dasa, we find vivid description of worships and various *Veshas* of Lord



Jagannath in poetic works of many Oriya poets such as *Ramabivbha*, *Kalpalata* of poet Arjun Dasa, "*Gupta Geeta*", "*Laxmipurana*" of Balaram Das, *Niladri Satakam* (in Sanskrit), *Gundicha Bije*, *Daru Brahmageeta* of Atibadi Jagannath Das, the author of *Oriya Srimad Bhagabat*.

During *Panchasakha* age, other *Panchasakha* poets of Oriya literature - Jasobanta, Achutananda and Ananta have also given vivid description of Lord Jagannath, His glory and grace in their poetic works.

Another Oriya poet Purusottam Das has written a historical poetry titled "*Kanchikaberi*" in which unflinching love between Lord Jagannath and milk-maid Manika - resembling consort Radha has been described in poetic heart touching and charming language. This poetry has also enriched folk literature of the Oriyas. Many ballads and *Suangas* were written on this theme of *Kanchikaberi*. This Jagannath cult also enriched Oriya *Bhajans* - lyrical devotional songs. Poetess Madhabi Das, Banamali Das and poets, Salabeg and Kabisurya Baladev Rath have written many *Bhajans* in praise of Lord Jagannath. Ramshakar Roy, a modern Oriya historical playwright wrote a full fledged drama titled "*Kanchi Kaberi*" in the year 1880, which was very much popular among the Oriya audience.

In the 17th century poet Loknath Bidyadhar wrote a very interesting poetry anthology named "*Niladree Mahotsav*" in which he portrayed various rituals and festivals relating to worship of Lord Jagannath. In the year 1820 another Oriya poet named Sri Gopinath Singh wrote a *Kabya* titled *Niladri Bihari* narrating the glory and grandeurs of different *Veshas* (costumes) of Lord Jagannath such as, *Sunavesha*, *Bali-Vamana Vesha*, *Kaliya Damana Vesha* and *Nagarjuna Vesha* etc.

During 18th and 19th century many celebrated Oriya poets like Bhima Bhoi - the Kandha Saint Poet, Dinakrushna Das author of *Rasakallola*, Purusottam Das, Poet of *Gundicha Bijay*. Judhistir Das, author of *Gundicha Yatra*, Baladeb Badajena - author Samar Tarang and *Gundnicha Vije* (in Hindi) enriched Oriya literature. Many Oriya ballads, *Bhajans*, *Suangas*, *Lilas*, *Jatras* and folk plays have got tremendous impetus and inspiration from many splendoured legends of the Holy Trinity - Jagannath, Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra.

In 20th Century, Oriya poets, novelists and dramatists have also been inspired to write on noble ideals of Jagannath cult. The famous poem titled "*Puri Mandir*" of well known poet Kalindi Charan Panigrahi, the poems of Pandit Gopabandhu Das, some devotional poems of Radha Mohan Gadnayak and poetess Brahmotri Mohanty, have added to the enrichment of Oriya literature. The classic Oriya novel. "*Nilasaila*" (1968) written by eminent novelist Surendra Mohanty, which is a master piece on the theme of Lord Jagannath and his preservation at the critical juncture of foreign invasion. In his novel, Lord Jagannath is the main character during the invasion of Orissa by Takki Khan, when Ramachandra Dev was the king during 18th century. The frantic effort of king Ramachandra Dev to save Sri Jagannath Icon has been narrated in this novel. Surendra Mohanty the novelist has also written another popular novel title "*Niladri Vijay*" (1980) on the theme of Lord Jagannath and His legends. Some Oriya modern poets, novelist and dramatist have used legends of Jagannath, many colloquial Oriya words and idioms around Jagannath rituals in their literary works. Poets of *Anama Gosthi* started a movement on the theme of Lord Jagannath and Jagannath cult to make Oriya literature more popular. This was definitely a good sign of



homeward journey from abstract, absurd themes to simpler Oriya social cultural milieu. The spirituality behind Lord Jagannath legends and cults find echoes Oriya modern poetry and novels. It requires in the further indepth study.

Every year car festival is held in the month of Ashadha (June, July). On the day of car festival and Bahuda Yatra, when the wheels of Chariots *Nandighosa* (car of Jagannath), *Taladhwaja* (the car of Balabhadra) and *Darpadalana* (the car of Subhadra), roll on *Bada Danda*, the Grand road at Puri, thousands and thousands of devotees throat roar the jubilant cry - 'Jai Jagannath' clapping, singing melodious *Bhajans* in praise of Lord Jagannath. This is really a wonderful scene where devotees realize the spiritual bliss. In this

car festival people of all castes, creeds and religions visit Puri to have *darshan* of Lord Jagannath as He is treated as "God of People". In the words of Oriya celebrated poet Dr. Mayadhar Mansingh on the cult of Jagannath "As a symbol of Trinity (Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath) is peculiarly significant with only two large eyes dominating the whole representation, each of the holy triad seems to become all - eye of the universe. His whole creation at one sweep and from whom nothing can be hidden in all the worlds".

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GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA SIGNS MOU WITH POSCO OF SOUTH KOREA

The Orissa Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with POSCO of South Korea for setting up of a 12 million tonnes per annum Integrated Steel Plant at Paradeep in Jagatsingpur district. The capacity of 12 million tonnes per annum will make the project not only the biggest in India but one of the biggest in the World. The project will be completed in two phases. Each phase will consist of two modules of 3 million tonnes per annum. The first module is expected to be completed by June, 2010. Thereafter, 3 million tonnes of capacity will be added every two years. Thus, the plant will reach its full capacity of 12 million tonnes by 2016. The development of road and rail linkages from the mining and coal belts of Orissa to the location of the steel plants and Paradeep port has been accorded very high priority and placed on a fast track. With POSCO's investment in Orissa, there is likelihood of many other medium and large Korean and Indian companies seeking investment opportunities in the ancilliary and downstream industries in the steel sector. The setting up of the steel plant by POSCO is likely to bring in a stream of revenue both to the Central Govt. and to the State Govt. The Central Govt. is likely to benefit to the tune of approx. Rs.89,000 crores over a period of 30 years by way of excise and customs duties, service taxes and corporate income tax. The Govt. of Orissa on the other hand, is likely to benefit to the tune of approx. Rs. 22,500 crores over a period of 30 years by way of sales tax/VAT, works contract tax, electricity duty, royalties, Orissa Infrastructure Tax and share of Central taxes. The entire project including mining, steel plant and port is likely to generate direct employment to the tune of 13,000 persons and indirect employment for 35,000 persons. During the construction stage, it is estimated that POSCO would need more than 18,000 skilled workers (such as carpenters, welders, brick layers, painters, electricians etc.) daily at the peak of construction activity. POSCO will set up a Company registered in India and this Indian Company will set up the integrated steel plant and apply for the mining leases as well as carry out all related operations. The registered Office of this Indian Company will be in Bhubaneswar. To meet the raw material requirements of the project, iron ore will be provided only for captive use of the steel plant to be set up by POSCO in Orissa. For this, 600 million tonnes of iron ore will be made available for captive use which will be adequate to meet the requirements of the steel plant for a period of 30 years.



*Lakshmi Narayana,
Narsinghanath, Circa
12th century A.D.*

Goddess Lakshmi : The Consort of the Lord

Sasanka Sekhar Panda



*Gajalakshmi
Narsinghanath, Circa
11th century A.D.*

Lakshmi, the consort of Lord Jagannath is enshrined in a separate and independent temple in the north-west corner in the Jagannath temple precinct at Puri. In Orissa, Lakshmi is worshipped as an independent deity, especially during the closing days of Dessehra (Asvina) month starting from Purnami day at Dhenkanal and Kendrapara, which is called the Gajalakshmi Puja. She is especially worshipped by the females of each and every household of Orissa on every thursday of the month of Margasira which is known as *Manabasa Gurubar*. Gajalakshmi motif, Lakshmi being bathed by two or four elephants, is carved in the centre of the architrave (*Dvaralalatabimba*) of the doorway of the sanctum sanctorum (*Garbhagriha*) of almost all temples, whatever might be their cult affiliation. This type of depiction started mostly during the Somavamsi period, from the second half of the 9th century and onwards. Such bathing scene of the goddess by two elephants is described in the *Visnudharmottara* where it is mentioned that a pair of elephants should stand behind her head upturning the water of two jars. (*Avarjitaghatam karyam tatprsthe kunjardvayam*). Further, this text mentions that the two elephants are the two *nidhi*, Sankha and Padma (*Hastidvayam vijanihi sankhapadmavubhau nidhi*).

In the upper Mahanadi valley of Orissa, Gajalakshmi motif appeared for the first time in the royal seals attached to the ring of the copper-plate charters of the Sarabhapuriya kings who were ruling in the 5th-6th century A.D. The Sarabhapuriya kings were *Parama Bhagavata*. They patronised the propagation of the *Pancaratra* or *Bhagavata* cult in their kingdom. Learned

scholar J.N. Banerjea has identified the mutilated standing female figure found by Major General Alexander Cunningham amidst the ruins of Besnagar alongwith the Banyan capital as Srilakshmi and has proved her intimate association with the *Pancaratra* or the *Bhagavata* cult. He has quoted the relevant texts from the *Markandeyapurana* in support of his suggestion. The royal seal attached to the copper-plates of the Sarabhapuriyas bears the figure of two-handed goddess Lakshmi standing in the *Samabhanga* posture, being flanked by two elephants pouring water in their raised trunks on her head. The left hand of the goddess of wealth is in *Katyavalambita*, while the right hand is raised up.

This aspect of Lakshmi, popularly known as Gajalakshmi became a common motif in the royal seals attached to the rings of all the copper plate charters of the Somavamsi kings, who were ruling the upper Mahanadi valley in the 9th-10th century A.D. and the entire Orissa (Utkal, Kalinga and Kosala) in the 11th century A.D. But in the Somavamsi copper-plate charter seals Lakshmi is depicted in the seated posture instead of in the standing posture as found in the Sarabhapuriya royal seals. Two repousse gold coins found in a village near Junagad town of Kalahandi district also bear the figure of Lakshmi seated in *Padmasana* being flanked by two elephants in both sides. Both the elephants are standing in their hind legs like human beings and their trunks are raised. This type of depiction of elephants standing in their hind legs is found in the royal seals of the Sarabhapuriya copper-plate charters also. Both the coins seems to be imitation of the Sarabhapuriya repousse gold



coins, and struck in the same fashion, and those are believed to be Somavamsi gold coins by this scholar.

The earliest of the Gajalaksmi motifs in the upper Mahanadi valley is found amidst loose sculptured panels of a temple ruins at Chandi Mandir, Saintala in the Balangir district, where two-handed Laksmi is seated in the *Padmasana* being flanked by two elephants, one in each side, standing in their hind legs and pouring water on the head of the goddess in their raised trunks. This motif might have adorned the central portion of the architrave or the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the doorway to the *Garbhagriha* of a temple of the Panduvamsi period, i.e. 8th century A.D. To the proper right portion of this figure there are two more depictions; one is that of three Yaksa-type figures and the other of a dancing Ganesa. The middle depiction might be that of Kuvera and his two associates. All the three depictions, Gajalaksmi, Kuvera and his two associates and dancing Ganesa are separated by pilaster designs. This seems to be a panel depicting the Trinity of Fortune, i.e. Ganesa, Abhiseka Laksmi and Kuvera. Another such panel is found in the University Museum at Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Gajalaksmi as a motif in the centre of the *Dvaralalatavimba* in the Siva temple at Deulgudi in Balangir district seems to be interesting. In one such depiction Laksmi devoid of any ornamentation is seated in the *Lalitasana*. Two elephants are depicted in the top-corners of the niche, above her head. Both the elephants are carved in profile and not in the conventional posture of flanking the goddess in both sides. The connection of lotus flower with Laksmi is focussed by a three-dimensional full-blown lotus carved just below the Laksmi figure in the edge of the architrave. It can be dated to the beginning phase of the Somavamsi period in the upper Mahanadi valley, i.e. the middle of the 9th century A.D.(850 A.D). Such a plain Gajalaksmi figure is found carved in a stone beam, now kept in the Siva temple precinct at Jogisurda in Balangir district, and another carved in the door-lintel of the gateway to the Kosalesvara temple complex at Vaidyanath in Sonapur district.

The ornamentations became more elaborate. In a Gajalaksmi motif found carved on the centre of the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the gateway to the

brick-built *Jagamohana* hall of the Kosalesvara temple at Vaidyanath, two-handed Laksmi is seated in *Lalitasana* on a *Padmapitha*. She is flanked by two lady attendants in both sides. In the top-portion, in both sides, two elephants with raised trunks are pouring water on her. In the base portions of the doorjamb, in both sides there are two *dvarapalas*. Such two-handed Gajalakshmi seated in *Lalitasana*, flanked by two lady attendants in both sides and two elephants in the top-portion is found in the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the eastern and northern doorways to the *Jagamohana* of the Narasinghnath temple at Paikmal also. But the Gajalaksmi motif of Paikmal (Narasinghnath) is very exquisitely carved, being bedecked by all ornaments like *Keyura*, *Kankana*, *Katimekhala*, *Kuchabandha*, and anklets etc. The lower portion of the pedestal has beautiful *Jalapatra* motif. The elephants are carved on two lotus flowers. Both the Gajalaksmi motifs of Vaidyanath and Narasinghnath are encircled by beaded line designs forming the rectangular niches in which they are. Three bands of scroll works, *Gelaba*, *Manusya Kautaki* and *Jalapatra* are carved in both sides of the Gajalaksmi niche and also in the doorjamb, in the base of which *Dvarapala* flanked by the river goddesses Ganga and Yamuna are carved on their respective mounts, tortoise and crocodile. In the eastern doorway at Narasinghanath, Navagraha slab is fitted above the *Dvaralalatavimba*, which convention was also popularised during the Somavamsi period. Like the elaborately carved doorjamb of Vaidyanath and Narasinghnath, the doorways of all three temples of the Ramesvara group at Baudh are also noteworthy, where the doorjamb have all the three bands of scroll works, the *Dvarapalas* and Gajalaksmi motif as well as the Navagraha slab above the doorway. But the river goddesses are absent. In the case of the doorways to the inner sanctums of the Kosalesvara temple at Daspur Surda in Balangir district and the Vimalasvara temple at Huma in Sambalpur district, the doorjamb are having the Gajalaksmi motif, the three bands of scroll works and the *Dvarapalas*. But the Navagraha slab is absent. While Laksmi is seated in *Padmasana* at Daspur Surda, she is depicted in *Lalitasana* sitting posture at Huma. At Baudh, in the Ramesvara temple complex another slab is lying loose, in which the



Navagraha panel has a Gajalaksmi motif attached to it just below in the central portion, where Laksmi is depicted in *Padmasana*. Such a Navagraha slab with a comparatively smaller Gajalaksmi motif depicting Laksmi in *Padmasana* is found at Pandhuakhhol in Naktideul block area of Sambalpur district also. In these cases Laksmi is shown in a diminutive form being over-shadowed by the Navagraha. In one common long panel found fitted in the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the brick-built Patalesvara temple at Budhikomna in Nuapara district. Gajalaksmi is carved in one row along with the Navagrahas. It seems to be the precursor of all the Gajalaksmi panels having Navagraha above them.

Gajalaksmi motif continued to adorn the centre of the *Dvaralatavimba* of the doorways to the inner sanctums, mostly of Siva temples even upto the Chauhan period i.e. 15th-19th century A.D. In a later example found at Deheli in Baudh district, Laksmi seated in *Lalitasana* is depicted, but the grace is lost in the carving. Instead of three bands of scroll works there are two bands, the top-one with *Jalapatra* and the middle-one with big flower bud motifs, while the lower-one is absolutely plain. In the *Garbhagrha* doorway of the Champesvara Siva temple at Champamal in Sonapur district, in both sides of the Gajalaksmi motif, the doorjamb and its base are having the carving of big floral decorations, with two lines of strings of buds in both sides.

The most elaborate of the *Dvaralalatavimba* (door-lintel) of the gateway to the *Garbhagrha* is found in the Kapilesvara temple at Charda in Sonapur district. The upper-most panel has the scene of Siva and Parvati playing chess, while the middle panel has the figure of Anantasayana Visnu, below which Gajalaksmi motif is depicted in a rectangular niche. Such *Dvaralatavimba* having Gajalaksmi motif and elaborate depiction of Nagas above it as well as Anantasayana Visnu in the upper panel (second one) is found fitted to the doorway of the *Garbhagrha* of the Rajivalochana temple at Rajim in the Raipur district of Chhattisgarh State. As the temple at Rajim is dated to the 8th century A.D. and belongs to the Nala rule, the elaborate depictions found on the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the temple at

Charda might have been influenced by the Rajim style.

In most of the early temples of the upper Mahanadi valley of Orissa; generally, the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the doorways to the *Garbhagrha* are adorned with Gajalaksmi motif in the centre. In some cases, either a panel of ordinary letter as at Baudh, Karadi, Vaidyanath (the small shrine, Suvesvara temple), Deulgudi, Kusang, Narsinghnath and Harishankar or a panel of the Anantasayi Visnu; as at Charda, Vaidyanath and Kusang are found carved above the Gajalaksmi motif. This decorative programme has some variations at Budhikomna, where the Gajalaksmi motif is amidst the Navagrahas in one panel. But on the door-lintel of the *Garbhagrha* of the Khambeswari temple at Sonapur, a panel of ten lady figures is carved in one panel. In the first and tenth positions they are in standing posture with both hands folded in obeisance, whereas rest of the eight goddesses (including Gajalaksmi) are in the seated position. Gajalaksmi is in the center, flanked by three and four seated *Devi* figures, carved under *Chhatra* design and on their left thigh they hold one child each, seated on it. In this Gajalaksmi motif, Laksmi is seen to be seated in *Lalitasana*. Most probably, this is a unique Gajalaksmi panel and the only of its kind, depicting the *Saptamatrkas*, a cult popularized some-time around the 9th century A.D. This panel might have been fitted during the Chauhan period by collecting it from the ruins of an earlier temple. We find another unique Gajalaksmi panel, flanked by four elephants at Sonapur, at present fitted on the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the *Garbhagrha* of the Rameswara temple, situated on the confluence of the river Tel with the Mahanadi. In this panel, a four-handed figure of Laksmi seated in *Padmasana* is carved in the center, flanked by four elephants, two in each side, standing with pitchers on their trunks raised to pour water on her. In the extreme left and right sides of this panel, there are profiled figures of one female and one male devotee, both sitting in kneeled down position worshipping Laksmi with folded hands in obeisance. Such Gajalaksmi motif with four elephants is also found at Budhikomna. Besides these Gajalaksmi panels of the Khambesvari temple and the Ramesvara temples, other temples where Gajalaksmi motifs



occur on the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the *Garbhagrha* are the temples of Suvarnameru, Samalei, Gopinath and one sub-shrine behind the Jagannath temple as well as in a *Devi* temple near the Gopinath temple. In all these five cases, the Laksmi figure is four-handed and seated in *Padmasana*. Her lower left hand is in *Abhaya* and the left one in *Varada*, while in her raised upper hands she is holding *Padmanada*. In the case of the Gajalaksmi panel of the sub shrine behind the Jagannath temple, both the elephants are seen to be standing on lotus in both sides of her with trunks raised above her head. The most astounding are two panels of the Anantasayi Visnu, one found on the door-lintel of the *Jagamohana* of the Rameswara temple and the other one in similar position in the Suvarnameru Siva temple. Learned scholar B.K. Rath has rightly taken both these panels to be of the Somavamsi period. Another learned scholar Henery Von Stietencron is of the view that the Anantasayi Visnu panel is a common feature found in the Visnu temples of the upper Mahanadi valley as found on the door-lintel of the *Garbhagrha* of the Laksmiana temple at Sirpur (Raipur district of Chhattisgarh State) and on the massive western entrance of the Rajivalochana temple at Rajim (Raipur district). Both these temples are assigned to the Panduvamsi rule in Kosala and to circa 8th century A.D.

During the Chauhan period, although Gajalaksmi figures were carved on the *Dvaralalatavimba*, the sculptors have not followed the prescribed iconographic programme. In one such motif found at Pujaripali in Jharsuguda district, Laksmi is depicted as four-handed, sitting in *Padmasana*. Instead of holding lotus flowers, she is holding the legs of two elephants in both her upraised hands, while the lower proper right and left hands are in *Abhaya* and *Varada Mudras*. She is wearing a long garland, which is hanging from her neck up to the pedestal, below which petalled flowers in semi-diamond circle are carved. Such floral designs in continuation are carved in both sides on the *Dvaralalatavimba*. The Gajalaksmi motif found in the Ramesvara temple at Sonepur is unique, where the four-handed Laksmi, seated in *Padmasana* is flanked by big elephants of the same size of the image of the goddess, although in other cases the elephants are depicted in a smaller size than that of the goddess.

Another peculiar Laksmi figure is found carved on a stone-panel, now lying amidst loose sculptures at Sukhabandh near Hemgir town of Sundargarh district. This *Dvaralalatavimba* is 52" in length and 15" in breadth. It is an excellent piece of art, having an image of Laksmi in the centre. To the proper right of Laksmi image, there is a carving of two lions (lion and lioness). Similarly in the proper left portion, there is a carved motif depicting two swans. In the extreme left side of the panel is a dancing Yaksa, while in the extreme right is the figure of Ganesa seated in *Maharajalila* posture. This panel has foliage motifs and dotted line designs. Laksmi, Ganesa and the dancing Yaksa figures are carved in miniature temple niche designs. It is very peculiar that, the image of Laksmi is not that of *Abhiseka* Laksmi or Gajalaksmi as found in the central portion of the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the temples of the Somavamsi period, i.e. 9th-11th century A.D. Elephants with raised trunks are absent in this case. We find here a four-handed image of Laksmi, seated in *Padmasana*. It is an image of *Saubhagya* Laksmi, who is worshipped for happy and blissful conjugal life.

Very few single images of Gajalaksmi are found in the upper Mahanadi valley, numbering only four at Uraladani., Gandharadi, Narasinghnath and Sonepur. Those were probably worshipped as independent images in separate temples dedicated to the Goddess. An image of Gajalaksmi of the size of around 15" in height and 6" in breadth is found in a *mundi* niche on the east of the *Jagamohana* of the Siddhesvara temple at Gandharadi in Baudh district, where she is depicted in the seated posture of *Padmasana*, holding a long-stemmed lotus in each hand.

A beautiful Gaja-Laksmi image of the size of around 2'.5" in height and 1'.4" in breadth has been collected from Sankushgad and worshipped by one Shri Chakradhar Patra, an inhabitant of Uraladani village of M. Rampur Tehsil area of Kalahandi district. This image is chiselled on red stone. It is a four-handed image in which goddess Laksmi is seated in *Lalitasana*. In both her upper hands she is holding long-stemmed full-blown lotus, while her lower left and right hands are in *Abhaya* and *Varada mudras*. Two profiled figures of



elephants are in both top-corners of the slab with their trunks raised, pouring water on her head. The peculiarity of this image is that there is a ram carved as her *vahana* in the pedestal portion.

Although Gajalaksmi motif is usually carved in the centre of the *Dvaralalatavimba* of the *Garbhagrha* or *Jagamohana* doorways, a slight deviation is found at Narsinghnath, where we find a four-handed Laksmi figure fitted to a niche in the northern side, just below the Raha portion, in between an *Angasikhara* motif and the *Baranda*. This image is made of polished red stone, depicting the goddess seated in the *Padmasana* posture on a lotus pedestal. She is holding a *Sankha* in her upper right hand and keeping both her lower hands on the thighs. Her upper left hand is broken. She is flanked by two elephants with raised trunks over her head.

Besides the Gajalaksmi motifs and independent figures, two images of Laksmi-Narayana in the same style of Uma-Mahesvara are found at Belkhandi in Kalahandi district and Narsinghnath in Bargarh district. The Laksmi-Narayana image found at Belkhandi, from the stylistic ground can be dated to the second half of the 8th century A.D. The other Laksmi-Narayan image found at Narsinghnath can be dated to around 12th-13th century A.D. The Laksmi-Narayana image of Belkhandi has been taken as the earliest of its kind by learned scholar J.P. Singh Deo.

The Laksmi-Narayana image of Narsinghnath is fitted in a niche to the left side of the eastern doorway of the *Jagamohana* of Narsinghnath Temple. Lord Narayana is sitting in *Lalitasana* with his consort Laksmi on his left thigh. The left leg of Laksmi and the right leg of Narayana are hanging below. The lower left hand of the Lord is around the back of Laksmi drawing her closer to his body. His arm has come out from under the left armpit of Laksmi and touching her left breast. Laksmi is holding a lotus flower in her left hand and looking at the Lord with a bewitching smile. The Lord is holding a *Cakra* and a *Gada* in his upper right and left hands respectively, while in his lower right hand is a *Sankha*. The divine couple are heavily bedecked with ornaments. This seems to be a sculptural representation of the 12th-13th

century A.D. The facial charm of the Somavamsi period is not found in the faces of the divine couple, instead there is a tight-lipped frowning gesture.

The worship of the divine couple, Laksmi and Narayana seems to be popular from the 8th century onwards in the upper Mahanadi valley, as in the invocatory verses of the Kumurakela plates of the Bhanja king Satrubhanja of Khinjali Mandala, the divine couple Laksmi and Narayana has been worshiped at the beginning : '*Anabarata Bahala Pulaka Laksmikuchapidanena Duritambah / Apaharata Surabhi Parimalasusatapadamura sthalam Visnuh* // (Tr. Prof. Rajkishore Mishra - Laksmi in constant caress of Lord Visnu appears to be trans and drops of sweat coming out of her breast with all its ardour, wipe out sins and cleanse the Universe).

From all the above archaeological evidences it is clear that right from the period of the Sarabhapuriyas, i.e. 5th-6th century A.D. the worship of goddess Laksmi was given much emphasis and therefore she has been depicted in the Sarabhapuriya royal seals (of the copper plate charters), gold coins of the Somavamsis and Kalacuris, *Dvaralalatavimba* of most of the Siva, Sakti and other temples, built during the Panduvamsi, Bhanja, Somavamsi, Ganga and Telugu Choda periods. There are ample evidences of her worship as an independent deity and also alongwith her consort Lord Narayana (Visnu) in the upper Mahanadi valley of Orissa.

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