



The Origin of Lord Narasimha

Dhruva Dasa

(I)

Pilgrimage to Ahovalam :

Ahobilam is known to be the place where Nrsimhadeva appeared. In 1980 I was born to devotee parents in the large Hare Krishna community of New Vrindavan, West Virginia. From my infancy my parents brought me to the temple each day. Gradually, as a young child I grew attached to the large, fierce-looking deity of Krishna's form as Lord Nrisimhadeva (Narasimha) and His foremost devotee, the boy-saint Prahlada. When I was six, Prahlada's age, the priest allowed me to assist him in the temple worship of Lord Nrisimhadeva. Although the Lord looked frightening, I always felt protected when I stood before Him.

When I was sixteen my family visited India. I fell in love with the spiritual atmosphere there and decided to return as soon as possible. By the time I turned eighteen I had decided to make the journey on my own. I worked hard to save for the trip and agonized over my itinerary. India is so big-where should I go?

One day I visited the Hare Krishna temple in Miami. As I glanced over a large stack of old issues of Back to Godhead, a stray breeze blew open the top one to a full- page photo of Lord Nrisimhadeva. The picture seemed to beckon me.



Reading the accompanying article, I was amazed to learn about a young sannyasi, Indradyumna Swami, who had made an incredible journey to Ahovalam, a remote South Indian holy place said to be the very spot where Lord Nrisimhadeva dispatched the evil Hiranyakashipu. His article inspired me so much that I set my mind then and there on making the difficult pilgrimage to Ahovalam.

Warnings

I began my India adventure in Vrindavana, where I visited a remarkable three-eyed deity of Nrisimhadeva. From there I proceeded south to several well-known holy places, including Srirangam and Tirupati, my last stop before Ahovalam.

The devotees at the ISKCON Tirupati temple asked me where I was going next. When I said Ahovalam, they looked at me as if I were crazy and urged me not to go. Seeing they could not dissuade me, they strongly cautioned me to



stay only for one day and get out of there. I thought they were just joking until I realized that I was the only one laughing. An experienced devotee warned me that people there try to rob and kill you and that the surrounding jungle holds ferocious, wild animals such as bears, tigers, and cobras. With these words of encouragement I felt terrified-but even more excited ! The journey would truly test my faith in Lord Nrisimhadeva. After a grueling ten-hour bus ride, I arrived at the Allagada station, where I'd catch the Ahovalam bus. As I waited, a large group of people suddenly surrounded me, the only blonde kid in the whole station. An English-speaking man asked where I was going. When I replied, "Ahovalam," he looked at me very strangely. When he told the crowd what I had said, everyone stared at me even more.

"Why do you want to go to such a place?" he asked. "It is a very dangerous place."

"I am going to see Lord Nrisimhadeva," I replied.

"May He protect you," he uttered gravely, and walked away.

Aboard the bus and getting closer to Ahovalam, I could feel my limbs start to tremble, and my heart beat fast. I didn't know what lay ahead, but I was going to see my Lord at His home.

The Lord Sends a Guide

After an hour on the bus through the middle of nowhere, I reached the tiny village of Lower Ahovalam. There I saw Lord Nrisimhadeva at the Lakshmi-Narasimha temple, the first of nine forms of the Lord to be seen in the Ahovalam area. Then I arranged for some rough accommodations-the only kind available. A shower is a bucket of water you pour over yourself.

I was in the middle of my shower when someone knocked on the door and called out, "Hello. Hare Krishna !"

Having been warned about thieves, I opened the door cautiously. There stood two Indian men. One of them, tall and saintly looking, introduced himself as Madhu, from Vijaywada. Years before, he had lived in an ISKCON ashram and was now initiated in the Ramanuja line. He said he'd heard that I wanted to see all nine forms of Lord Narasimha.

"Yes," I answered, thinking, Word sure gets around fast here.

He said, "I'm going to go tomorrow morning. Why don't we go together? I have been several times and can take you to all nine forms."

I felt convinced this must be Nrisimha's arrangement, so I readily agreed. I asked Madhu how much he would charge.

"I am glad just to serve another devotee," he humbly replied.

Madhu said that to see all nine forms in one day, we would have to spend the night in the jungle.

The Trek Begins

In the morning I rose early and met Madhu. We visited the nearby Lakshmi-Narasimha temple to pray for a safe journey. Remembering a photograph in the old Back to Godhead, I recognized the same pujari who had taken Indradyumna Swami on his tour here in 1979.

Our walk to Bhargava-Narasimha, the second of the nine local forms of Nrisimhadeva, took us through a thick jungle with paths in all directions. Madhu said that no matter how many times you go there you can never remember the way.

"You have to depend on the Lord," he said. The next thing you know, we were lost. I felt nervous. We finally found the way and arrived at the beautiful temple, where we chanted for a while.



In the past many great sages worshiped the deity here. Madhu said that the deity is named for Parashurama (also known as Bhargava), the warrior incarnation of God. Parashurama had performed penance near Ahovalam at a place now known as Ramatirtha.

Next we set off to see the third form, Catravada Narasimha. Madhu mentioned that if we were lucky we would be able to see all nine forms on this holy day. Catravada was a long walk from town, but I was extremely pleased to see Him. He was effulgent and had a big smile. We were allowed to touch our heads to His lotus feet.

Near Catravada is Yogananda Narasimha, the last of the nine forms of Lord Narasimha in Lower Ahovalam. He looked magnificent and powerful. Of the nine Narasimhas, Yogananda is said to be the most merciful.

We ran back to catch the bus to Upper Ahovalam, a trip through dangerous and treacherous terrain. After a while the bus stopped, and the driver directed us to get off. I saw nothing but jungle, but as the bus drove away, the temple of Karanja Narasimha came into view. He is named after a fruit-bearing tree growing next to the temple.

Having now visited the first five Narasimha forms, we had to walk the rest of the way to the next: Ugra Narasimha, a deity tucked in a cave between two mountains. The walk was beautiful. All around was an untouched jungle, overgrown and full of wild animals, which, fortunately, we

did not encounter. Soon we reached the temple of Ugra Narasimha, constructed inside His cave. The deity looked ferocious. We prayed for a safe trip to our next stop, the Ugra Stambha, said to be the actual pillar from which Lord Narasimha appeared.

Atop the Historic Pillar

After a side trip to the ancient Varaha Narasimha cave/temple, we followed an adjacent stream bed to the Ugra Stambha and the seventh form, Jvala Narasimha. The terrain proved most difficult. Madhu told me that not many people

make this journey because it requires crossing a huge and dangerous waterfall. On the way up I saw a couple of wooden boxes next to the path.

"Those are for the people who died making the climb," Madhu said. I didn't need to hear that.

Nestled on the side of a cliff, the Jvala Narasimha temple is said to be the exact spot where the Lord killed the demon Hiranyakashipu. Next to the temple is a large stream. At the spot where Narasimha washed his hands

after killing the demon, the water flows blood-red and even feels like blood.

After more climbing we reached the top of the large stone pillar. The view was spectacular. I couldn't believe I'd actually made it. We'd been walking all day long, with very little to eat and just water to drink, but I hadn't thought of anything except the thrill of being in this spiritual place.





My contentment was short-lived; now it was time to go to the eighth form, which meant another long walk through the mountains. At last we reached the temple of Mohaloha Narasimha, situated on the side of a mountain. According to Madhu, Lakshmi did penance to marry the Lord here.

Next we went to the Prahlada school, which has Sanskrit writing on the walls dating from the days of Prahlada's studies here. Near this high, mountainous spot was another cave, with a beautiful Yoga Narasimha deity in it. But we still had one more destination: the Bhavana Narasimha deity, four miles away.

Although Madhu had warned me not to walk ahead on the path, I did so anyway. Suddenly a huge cobra slithered in front of me. It seemed to be ten feet long. I heeded Madhu's warning and let him lead. The jungle was so dangerous, even in the daytime. Now it was close to dark, and we still had miles to go.

As we ascended the mountain trail, nearby villagers screamed angrily at us. Madhu just kept walking. When we reached a mountain-top stopping point, he told me they were saying that it is forbidden to enter the jungle at night because of the wild animals. People who go in, they said, never come out again. They also said that no one should go to the Bhavana temple at night, because at that time the demigods come to worship Lord Narasimha.

Now I was really scared. Then I saw a dead snake in the middle of the path. A bad omen, Madhu said, but we just had to depend on the Lord for protection. Suddenly it was pitch black. I pulled out my tiny flashlight. I shook with fear and prayed to Lord Narasimha for protection.

Protected by Fire

In spite of the dark we somehow made it over the big mountain. As we did, we were

amazed to see that the forest ahead was on fire, except for the small path we were following.

I thought, It must be Lord Narasimha lighting up the jungle and keeping wild animals away. The fire went on all the way to the temple.

At last we reached the ninth and last deity. Lord Narasimha and His consort looked so beautiful. We thanked Him for allowing us to attain His audience.

We were exhausted, and it was too dark to go back, so we decided to sleep in the front area of the tiny temple. I tried to go to sleep, but I felt too excited and amazed to be sleeping in the Lord's temple.

Suddenly I felt something sniffing and touching the back of my neck and ear. I jumped up and saw nothing. Madhu said he would stay up to see what it was. He turned on the flashlight and began telling me wonderful stories about the Lord. Then, with a loud pop, the brand-new flashlight went out. We tried everything to fix it, but without success.

Just at that moment the wind started to blow ferociously. I wondered if we were offending the demigods by being here. After a while I fell asleep, only to be awakened by Madhu frantically pulling me into the temple's inner sanctum. I was so groggy I didn't ask why. Madhu hastily slammed the gate shut and secured it as best he could.

Furry Guests

Looking up I was stunned to realize I was sitting right at the base of Lord Narasimhadeva's lotus feet. I lay down and felt at peace. Then a bone-chilling roar broke the stillness.

I froze and whispered to Madhu, "What was that ?" He assured me there was nothing to worry about. "Just go to sleep," he said. The next morning we set off for a long walk to two more



Narasimha temples, named Giridhari and Jyoti. Jyoti was the most amazing and ferocious deity of all I'd seen. His name indicates that the forest would always be burning because of His anger.

From Jyoti we were able to catch a bus back to Ahovalam. It took seven hours. In the evening when we arrived we went straight to Lakshmi-Narasimha temple-the first stop on our tour-and thanked the Lord for His protection. Later, while we ate, Madhu explained why he had moved me to the inner sanctum of the Bhavana temple the previous night. While I was asleep, three huge wild black bears had come up, smelled us, and circled the temple.

The next morning we returned to see Bhargava Narasimha, the second of the nine forms. I felt blessed when we were allowed to clean the whole temple. As we left, a crowd of villagers surrounded us. Madhu spoke with them, then translated for me. They were shocked to see us alive after entering the jungle at night. They also said that, although they were born there and had lived their whole lives in the area, we were the first people they'd known who had managed to see all nine forms of Lord Narasimha in a single day.

Meeting the Swami

It was time to move on. I thanked Madhu profusely, and we both said we hoped to meet again. Because of his humble and devotional attitude, Madhu had been an inspiration for me. Far from trying to take advantage of me, an inexperienced young Westerner in a foreign land, Madhu had taken care of everything, even our bus fares. As my bus lumbered away, I thanked Lord Narasimha for giving me Madhu's company.

A few days later I arrived in Jagannatha Puri. After checking in to a hotel, I was astonished to learn that Indradyumna Swami happened to

be staying at the very same place. I had never met him, except through the article in the old BTG. I went to his room and paid my respects. Tears filled his eyes as he learned of the journey I had made in his footsteps.

Simhachalam

Simhachalam which means "Lion Hill" is in Andhra Pradesh, South India. It is the second most richest temple in India after the Tirupati temple. The deity there is of Varaha lakshmi Nrsimha Swamy . A very rare form of the Lord which is only revealed for 12 hours on one day (Aksaya Tritiya, the first day of candana yatra) and the rest of the year it is covered in a hill of sandalwood paste in order to keep the Lord cool. When Prahlada was thrown of the hill by his father's army, the demons, Krishna or Vishnu stood below the hill to catch Prahlada. It is believed that the place where the Lord stood is where the temple is built. The original shape of the deity in the tribhanga posture has two hands with the head of a lion on a human torso.

(II)

Jagannath Puri and Narasimha Worship

Jagannatha Puri in Orissa is a very famous place of pilgrimage for the devotees. It is home to The Lord of The Universe, Jagannatha with His brother, Baladeva and His sister, Subhadra. It also got lots of Nrsimha Temples ! :-

Even though Puri is a famous Vaisnavite center, there is no other Vaisnavite shrine worth the name except the Temple of Jagannath and minor Vaisnava shrines of other incarnations of Visnu. The worship of Lord Visnu is very much popular among the Hindus. He is the Protector who rescues humanity at the time of distress. The time when the evil prevails upon the truth, Visnu takes different incarnations to annihilate the evil and rescue the saints and truthful. The Vaisnavas



worship the ten incarnations of Visnu. His fourth incarnation is the great god Narasimha, Who has the body of a man and the body of the lion. Similar combined forms are to be noticed in the icons of Varaha, Dakshya Prajapati, Ganesha, and Gomukhi Keshaba. The image of Narasimhanath of Paikamal, in Baragarh district, is Marjara Keshari. The image of Sarabha is illustrated in the composite of a man, bird and beast. Evolved as one of the Avatars of Visnu, Lord Nrsimha grew into prominence and was worshipped independently, considered as the full incarnation of the Lord. In the Sakti Sangama tantra it is mentioned that Visnu assumed the Narasimha Avatar in the Kritayuga, Angira year, Madhav month and 14th day in the Swati Nakshatra. In the Skanda Purana it is written that Narasimha appeared on the lunar 14th day of Baishakha in Swati Nakshatra, on Saturday during dusk. We do not find the name Narasimha in the Vedic period. The Name is only found in Atharvaveda, where Narahari is worshipped by Ganadeva. Astadhyayi of Panini did not mention the name. However, the epic Mahabharata (Harivamsa), Puranas like Matsya, Padma, Kurma, Visnu, and Visnu Dharmottara, associate Narasimha with Visnu. Based on these, K.C. Das believes that all these Puranic references to Narasimha were known during the Gupta period. There are two broad types of Narasimha images, i.e., Ugra and Saumya. But T. Gopinatha Rao has divided the images of Narasimha into three groups: Sthauna, Girija and Yanak. The word "Sthauna" refers to Narasimha coming out of the pillar; "Ugra" and Girija coming out of caves (yoga). Some call it



Keshava, and Yanak is seated on Garuda or Shesha, with five hooded canopy held like an umbrella. When Laxmi is on the left lap, the image is called Laxmi-Narasimha. The deity sitting in Utkutikasana with Yogapatta and Laxmi on the left lap is very common and popular in Orissa, and Oriyas worship Him as the embodiment of valour, vitality and virtue. The popularity of the Lord is evinced from the hymns and Suktas composed for him, including Stotram, Puranas and Upanisads. Not only in literatures, but also in

epigraphic records and sculptural art are found references of Narasimha worship. There are 105 Narasimha temples with land endowments in Orissa. A list was prepared by G.C. Tripathy, out of the materials collected by H.V. Stietencorn. Besides this, there exist many more temples scattered

through out the State. In addition, a large number of detached images find a place in other temples, such as Parswadevatas. The worship of Lord Narasimha was sanctioned in western Orissa during the Gupta era. In the research article of scholar Sasanka Sekhar Panda, "Purusottama Jagannath is Purusottama Narasimha" published in Orissa Review, Ratha Yatra Special Issue, June 2006, it has been mentioned that three Narasimha images are found at Podagarh, Sarguli and Parwa in Nabarangapur district, which are believed to be images of the Vakataka period, who conquered Puskari (Podagarh) of the Nala kings in the 5th and 6th century A.D. Another image of Narasimha of Maraguda, now in Khariar Branch Museum, is believed to be of the period of the Sarabhapuriyas. In Sirpur Inscription, Queen



Vatasa, mother of King Mahasivagupta Balajurna of Pandu dynasty, had paid her homage to Lord Purusottam and sought the blessings of Narasimha. During the Somavamsi rule, Narasimha worship got a new impetus afterwards. Some of the ruling dynasties like Kadambas of Goa, the Imperial Gangas of Orissa and the Vijayanagar kings in India have Narasimha as their tutelary Deity. From the Dasagoba copper plate of Rajarajadeva, it is revealed that Sri Laxmi Narasimha was the tutelary Deity of the Ganga. In the Kaleswar Siva Temple Inscription of Anangabhimadeva III, the Ganga ruler Chodagangadeva is compared with Narasimha. Four of the Ganga kings bore the title of Narasimha, which proves the popularity of Lord Narasimha of that time. As found in the Dynasty Ganga Vamsanucharita, from among the 27 kings of Eastern Ganga, seven kings before Chodaganga had the word Narasimha added to their names. Narasimha temples and Narasimha sculptures of large varieties of this time (10th to 13th c. AD) found in every nook and corner the State, prove the patronization of the cult by the ruling dynasties. The association of Narasimha with Puri is unique. Puri is a recognized Vaisnavite centre of India, in the Province of Orissa. Puri came to prominence, not as a political centre but as a socio-religious and cultural centre. It has not been the capital of the kingdom at any point of history of Orissa. Therefore, the rise and fall of the dynasties in its long history have no role in the tale of the sanctity of the city. Puri is the site of the gods from time immemorial. Puri, the city of gods, was the land of Narasimha at one time, the land of Purusottama at other times, and finally the land of Lord Jagannath today. With scanty historical sources, it is very difficult to reach a positive conclusion. Puri was under the domain of different dynasties ruling over the kingdom in different periods of history. We don't find any

specific historical references about this place during the rule of the Chedis, Murundas, Matharas, Pitruvaktas, Vighrahas, Sailodvabas or the Bhaumakars. But during this period, Puri had gained a remarkable popularity as a place of religious importance and there are literary and archaeological references of Madhava worship by the tribals at this place. This led Dr. S.N. Rajaguru to justify that Madhavaraja II of Sailodvaba dynasty had established the shrine of Madhava at Puri and entrusted its management to some of his kinsmen, who were supposed to be tribals. During this period the philosophy of Vaisnavism was divided into two sections, namely (1) Vaikhanasa School and (2) Pancaratrika School. The Vaikhanasa worshipped Visnu in three phases, namely Purusa (Omnipotent), Achyuta (imperishable), and Anirudha (unconstraint), while the later Pancaratrikas followed Chaturvyuha cult and worshipped Vasudeva, Sankarsana, Pradyumna, and Anirudha. The Pancaratrika school might have gained popularity in Kalinga, Kangoda and other neighbouring tracts as long as the Sailodvabas continued their rule in that region. The Sailodvabas were the followers of Saivism. They must have constructed a large number of temples of Lord Siva in their dominion, surrounding all sides of Chilika Lake. Srikshetra (Puri) was topographically a religious centre of Kangoda, where some muni-asramas were established in the temples of Markandeya (Markandeswar Sahi near Markanda temple and Markanda Tank), Angira (Dolamandap Sahi), Pandu or Kandu, (Gaudabada Sahi near Jameswar temple) and Bragu. According to a system, introduced in Puri temples, the image of Sudarsana is carried to visit those risi-asramas on the auspicious days of Radhastami, Kumarotsava and Gamha Purnima. Sudarsana is to honour each sage at his temple or Asrama. That old system is still practised in



Puri. According to Mahabharata (Banaparva), the Pandavas were advised by Lomasha-muni to visit some sacred places after they crossed the river Vaitarani on their way to Kalinga. Again, Pandit Nilakantha Das states that the Jinasana brought back by Kharavela in the 1st century B.C. was worshipped as Purusottama Jagannath at Puri. But for want of any convincing evidence, we are not able to accept it, although Puri was an ancient Tirtha where Tapasvinis were dwelling in the hill caves. Some inscriptions of later Sailodvaba kings of Kongoda narrate the following verse, expressing that a king of that province could earn similar religious glory at his own capital as what the yogis and munis could achieve by performing hard austerity in mountain caves. Most probably, those hermits who lived in Kangodamandal were worshipping either Visnu or Siva in the coastal tracts, while in the hill areas, i.e., the western part of Kongoda, there lived Tantri yogis who were worshipping Devi (Durga) in the form of Stambheswari. In the Bhagavata Gita, Sri Krishna says, "I am Visnu among the Adityas" (Adityanam aham Visnuh)". It is therefore presumed that Puri, the seat of Madhava-Narasimha-Purusottama, might not have experienced the apathy of Bhaumakaras who were not hostile to Brahmanism, though they were Buddhists. During the Somavamsi rule, the epoch-making event was the coming of Sankaracharya to Puri. The visit of Sankaracharya inspired Narasimha worship to be popular in this locality. It is believed that Sankar had the blessings of Laxmi-Narasimha and wrote Sri Laxminarasimha Pancharatna Stotram, Sankatanasan Laxmi-Narasimha Stotram, and the Bhasyas of Narasimha Tapini Upanisad. Narasimha worship in the Govardhana Math and the figure of Sankar beneath the sculpture of Laxmi-Narasimha in the Jagamohana of Sri Laxmi temple of Shree Jagannath temple of Puri also associate Narasimha and Sankar. This fact is supplemented in the Skanda Purana (narration of

Indradyumna) and the Narasimha temple construction near Gundicha temple. A Telegu inscription of Chodagangadeva at Narasimha temple refers to Lord Narasimha worship in the pre-Ganga period. During the Ganga rule, after the coming of Sri Ramanuja of Sri Sampradaya, a devotee of Narasimha and promoter of Bhaktimarga, Narasimha Worship reached its climax. Narasimha worship reached every doorstep of Sakalautkala in general, and Puri in particular. It led Sena King Laxman to adopt the title of "Paramanarasimha." Lord Narasimha became the Khetrapala, or the guardian Deity of the kshetra. At present, we find a dozen Narasimha temples in the city, with many more in the Maths of Sankar, Ramanuja, and Madhugaudeswara order, as well as in the Jagagharas. We also find Narasimha as Parswadevata in Vaisnava, Saiva and Sakti temples.

Present day Narasimha Temples in and around Puri

Narasimha Temple (Jagannath Temple Precinct): It is a pancharatha rekha deula at a height is about 55ft. The presiding Deity is the Vidarana Narasimha in ugra pose. The image is of 1 ft. high, which is not matching size to the height of the temple (in accordance with the Silpasastras).

Yagna Narasimha Temple: It is near Gundicha temple. Its height is about 60 ft. The presiding Deity is Laxmi-Narasimha. An elevated place has been levelled for the erection of the main temple and its two front apartments. The area around the temple complex has been protected by high masonry walls with provision of a series of steps for entry into the premises on the eastern side.

The main temple built in pancharatha rekha order is fronted by a pyramidal jagamohan and a



rectangular natamandap. All the structures within the premises are thickly plastered in lime mortar, painted in matching colours. The bada of the main temple as well as the jagamohan indicate five-fold horizontal divisions and five vertical paga projections. The gandi of the main shrine is bereft of figure sculptures and decorative designs except, however, the projecting lions of the central rahapaga of all directions. The mastaka consists of the usual beki, amalakasila, khapuri, kalasa, and nilachakra.

The central niche of the outer walls contain figures of Varaha-Visnu, Trivikrama, of later workmanship, and a Visnu image of early Medieval period as parsvadevatas. The sanctum preserves a remarkable image of Laxmi-Narasimha on a high masonry pedestal. The artistic finish and iconographic peculiarity of the image take us back to the time of the Ganga period. The Deity was very likely installed at Puri by Chodagangadeva, who is said to have introduced the system of Narasimha worship in Orissa.

A similar Laxmi-Narasimha image is still noticed in the premises of Gangamandira of Cuttack town. The image in question is seated in Yogasana with both legs crossed and tied near the knee. Laxmi is found seated on His left lap. Of His four hands, the two lower ones are stretched over the knees and the two upper ones display conch and disc, the most favourite weapons of Visnu.

The jambs of the doorways leading to the sanctum are embellished with floral motifs, creepers, nagabandhas and scroll works. Figures of Jaya and Vijaya, the two legendary door-keepers of a Visnu temple are seen at the base of the jambs. The architrave over the door entrance is relieved with the figures of nine planets. A figure of Gajalaxmi is carved at the centre of the door

lintel. The outer walls of the jagamohan are set with several sculptures of much later workmanship. A large panel on the left wall of the jagamohana represents three mounted elephants on the march. The window grills of the jagamohana depict ladies playing on various musical instruments, salabhanjikas, alaskanyas, and gajasimha motifs, also of much later workmanship.

Chakra Narasimha Temple: It is at Chakratirtha road. It is a Pidha Deula, at a height of about 55 ft. In the sanctum of the temple there are three Narasimha images. Among these three Deities, the middle one is bigger than the other two and is seated inside the Chakra. It is known as the Chakra Narasimha. Of the others, the one on the left is Purusottom-Narasimha, and on the right is Ananta-Narasimha.

Pandu Narasimha Temple: It is in Pandu Asrama near Jameswar Temple, Gaudabada Sahi. The presiding Deity is the eight-armed Vidarana Narasimha, in Ugra pose.

Laxmi-Narasimha Temple: It is at Mangalaghat road near Bali school. It is a Pancharatha rekha deula. Its height is about 25 ft. It has jagamohan.

Narasimha Temples (four temples inside Jagannath temple): (A) Baisi Pahacha; (B) Suka; (C) Simachala; and (D) Uttar Dwara.

Singada Narasimha Temple (near Lokanath Temple): The presiding Deity is four-armed Laxmi-Narasimha, sitting on Utkatasan. A small image of Goddess Laxmi is sitting on the yogapata at the left thigh of the deity. She is offering betel in her right hand, looking to the Lord. She has a lotus in her left-hand. Narasimha in his uplifted back hands hold sankha and chakra, and his front two hands rest on his knee. The Deity is crowned by Kiritamukuta and he has three glittering eyes.



The Deity is adorned with different types of ornaments. He wears the Anantasarpa as sacred thread. Seven hoods of the snake cover as canopy over His head, amidst which the face of Balabhadra is seen with plough. Two female attendants like Sridevi and Bhudevi are found with folded hands on either sides of the Deity. A gajatorana supported by two pilasters is found just by the side of the Deity. At the right side base of the pillar there is a standing royal figure with folded hands. Perhaps it is the figure of legendary King Indradyumna. Just at the backside of Prahlad, Lord Siva is found in aradhana pose, and the image of Brahma with folded hands is seen at the left side. The presiding Deity is flanked by two Vidyadharas with garlands, perhaps because the image is very near to the pond full of a waterfruit named Singada.

Narasimha Temple: It is at Gadanti Chowk by the side of Meghanada Pachery of Srimandir. There is a miniature temple and the presiding Deity is four-armed Laxmi-Narasimha.

Kanchisasana Narasimha Temple: Kanchisasana is a Brahmin sasana village under Chalisbatia Gram Panchayat in the Sadar Block of Puri. This village is renowned for Narasimha worship. Most of the Brahmins are Atharvavedi and Narasimha is their tutelary Deity. The village has one Narasimha temple on the eastern side of the village temple. The presiding Deity is four-armed Laxmi-Narasimha. The temple is of rekha order and the height of the temple is 25 feet.

Jagannathpur Laxmi-Narasimha Temple: Jagannathpur is a Brahmin sasana village under Chalisbatia Gram Panchayat in the Sadar Block of Puri. It is 2 km from Kanchi sasana. The temple is of pidha order and is about 35 ft height. The presiding Deity is four-armed Laxmi Narasimha made of granite stone, exclusively carved and of fine elegance in craftsmanship, being about 6 ft. in height.

Rendha Narasimha Temple: It is on Puri-Brahmagiri Road at a distance of 10 km from Puri, at Rendha Chowk. The presiding Deity is four-armed Laxmi- Narasimha, and the Lord is highly revered.

Kusunikhuntia Jaga Narasimha: It is in the Jaga in Harachandi Sahi. It is a The Lord is highly revered. pidha deula of about 25 ft. height. The presiding Deity is four-armed Saumya Narasimha. The peculiar feature is the absence of any Laxmi figure. The Deity is crowned with seven-hooded Adishesha, which forms a canopy over His head.

Jadamath Narasimha: This temple is in a private Math in Pathuria Sahi. It is a pidha deula of about 23 ft. height. The presiding Deity is four-armed Laxmi- Narasimha.

Radhamadhav Narasimha Temple: It is located at Hatisal Chowk in Dukhishyama Chhata Math. The temple is 20 ft. height. The presiding Deity is four-armed Vidarana Laxmi-Narasimha.

Hinjalajaga Narasimha Temple: The temple is in the premises of the Jaga in Bali Sahi.

Barabatijaga Narasimha Temple: The temple is in the premises of the Jaga in Harachandi Sahi. The presiding Deity is four-armed Vidarana Laxmi-Narasimha.

Narasimha images on the temple walls, inside the temples on the premises of Jagannath Temple: Narasimha images carved into the walls are worshipped at some 50 places like Mukti Mandap, Bhogamandap, Natamandir, Narasimha and Nisa-Narasimha, Laxmi, Dadhibamana, Bhubaneswari and Madanamohan, Nandagopal temples, Ramamandira at Baisapahacha, Lion's Gate near Patitapaban.

Narasimha images in the temple as Parswadevata: These images are generally four-



armed and in vidarana posture on the back raha niche of the temple: (a) Gopinath temple at Keponjharkothi on Grand Road; (b) Radha Krishna temple at Gopinathpur near Atharnala; (c) Jagannath temple, Manikarnika Sahi; (d) Radha Krishna temple, Manikarnika Sahi; and (e) Patitapaban temple at Patitapaban Lane, Markandeswar Sahi.

Narasimha images in the temple as Parswadevata in Sakti temples: (a) a four-armed 1ft. image with back hands uplifted with sankha and chakra and front hands in dhyana and abhaya mudra in Dakshinakali temple, Kalikadevi Sahi; and (b) a 4 ft. high, three-eyed, with ramanandi chita, back hands uplifted with sankha and charka and front thands on His knee, sitting on Garuda in the Ramachandi Temple, Ramachandi Sahi are the examples. These seem to be recent installations.

Narasimha images engraved in the walls of the Saiva temples: These types of images are found in the temples of Jameswar, Lokanath and Kapalamochana. (a) The image (sculpture) is known as Panchamukhi Mahavir, having five faces, with Varaha in north, Narasimha in south, Siva or Hanuman in east, Garuda in west and Hayagriva on top, near Indradyumna Tank. The Deity has ten hands, holding sankha, trident, khatwanga, pasa, ankusa, hillock, dhuma, musthi, mace and snake. He is standing over the demon. It is stated in the Kapila Samhita that one will earn more punya if he/she makes a darsana of Sri Nilakantheswar, Yajna Narasimha and Panchamukhi Mahavir after taking sacred bath in Indradyumna Tank. (It is related to Adapa Mandap Yatra of Jagannath). (b) Garuda Tosana: It is also a unique sculpture in the niche of Bhogamandap. It is a two-armed Deity standing in dwibhanga pose over the lotus pedestal. There is a Garuda image in worshipping pose on the

right side of the Deity. In His right hand, the Deity is offering a laddu to Garuda, while his left hand is in katyavalambita posture. The legend associates it with the great Sankar.

Laxmi images: In almost all Laxmi-Narasimha sculptures of Puri, the size of Laxmi is very small and two-armed. The peculiarity noticed here is that Laxmi touches the mouth of Narasimha in her right hand in the process of offering betel. Another variation is found with the image at Algum, where Laxmi is four-armed.

Lord Narasimha is worshipped in almost all the Maths of Puri. The Maths at Puri have developed over the centuries into unique institutions, which have exercised profound influence on the religious and cultural life of the locals, as well as people coming to Puri. Adisankar is credited as being the pioneer of Math building. When he established Gobardhana/Bhavavardhana Math at Puri in the early 9th century A.D., it is said that Puri had 752 Maths. But the number is far below 100 at present.

The head of the Math is the Mahanta. He lives in these maths with sadhusanyasis, sisyas of the institution and some inmate students. These Maths belong to various Sampradayas and socio-religious groups. In these Maths, various Deities are worshipped, as per the sect they represent. The main Deity or subsidiaries are worshipped in the Maths. By this process, all Maths of different monastic order have promoted Narasimha worship. Ramanuja followed Adisankar in establishing Maths in considerable number, which are situated at every strategic place by his two categories of sisya order, the Bagel and Dingal. they facilitated Narasimha worship like their guru. These sisyas are of sanyasis and grihastas (Narasimhachari and Venkatachari).

Madhavacharya, another saint of the 13th century, had established one Narasimha temple



at Soda. Some Maths of Madhavacharya order also worship Lord Narasimha. Narahari Tirtha had established one Narasimha temple at Srikakulam. Ramayati Vaisnavas at Puri are worshipping Narasimha along with Rama and Sita.

Sri Chaitanya advised his disciples to have Danda Pranama (salutation by laying on the ground) to Lord Narasimha before taking darshan of Sri Jagannath. Sri Chaitanya Himself worshipped Lord Narasimha at third step of baisapahach, before going to have the darshan of Sri Jagannath. So in some Gaudiya Maths, Narasimha is worshipped.

There is a legend that Sri Gauranga saved Thakur Haridas from the attack of an enemy, assuming the Form of Narasimha. There is a separate temple for Narasimha in the Sidhabakula Math of Thakur Haridas. Similarly, some Maths of Ramananda order also have Narasimha worship. Atibadi Jagannath Das, author of the Oriya Bhagabat, started his writing with a salutation to Narasimha, so the Math of Atibadi Jagannath Das order has Narasimha worship. The palm leaf manuscript of Oriya Bhagabat is worshipped with great reverence as the representative of Jagannath or Narasimha. Therefore with the spread of Bhagabata and Bhagabata Tungi in Orissa, Narasimha became more popular as a Deity. In all these Maths, Narasimha is worshipped either in iconic form or aniconic form. The iconic forms are normally made of metals, mostly astadhatu and sometimes stone. The aniconic form is the worship of Salagrama, on which the face of Lord Narasimha is drawn.

Lord Nrsimhadev's Associations with the Shaiva and Jagannath Cults

Traditionally, seven Sahis (avenues) of Puri were set up encircling Sri Jagannath Temple with

a view to have Sevas of the Lord and to protect the shrine during times of crises. Each Sahi has an akhada (center). Under each of the akhadas there are some jagaghars (training centers). These jagaghars are the centre of physical and cultural training like kusti (wrestling), Oddisi song, Oddisi dance, Gotipua dance, and special Jaga Sangeetas under reputed gurus.

The term "jaga" in Oriya connotes a "place" like jagar of Himachal Pradesh. These jagagharas in Puri are the genuine centres of cultural awakening at the grass root level. Considering from this angle it may not be out of place to state that the term jaga is derived from the word "jagarana", which means to keep awake. The members of these jagagharas worship Hanuman (Mahavir) and Narasimha as the sources of power and strength. Even some jagas have been named after Lord Narasimha, like Narasimha Ballav and Nrsingha Ghar.

Narasimha is also associated with Saivism, as has been analysed by Eshmann. She states that the representation of Lingodbhava, where Siva appeared from the endless flaming Lingam, is usually represented as a huge column resembling the sense of Narasimha bursting out of the pillar. To support her view, we find a description in Vishnudhramottar Purana pointing to the face of Narasimha and manes surrounded with flames.

The flaming Lingam of Saivism and the flaming manes of Narasimha cult have close affinity. Eschmann has also stated another story from Visnudhramottar Purana where a devotee worships the Lingam until he has a vision of Narasimha appearing from it. This connection is represented in one of the early Siva temples in Orissa, near Baramba called Simhanath. The figure of Simhanath is carved on the front entrance. A standing human figure with a lion head holding a trident is locally known as Simhanath.



This speaks of Siva-Narasimha or Siva incorporating Narasimha.

The panels of Bhimeswar and Madhukeswar temples at Mukhalingam contain Narasimha images. In the Lingaraj temple premises there is a Laxmi-Narasimha image. At the Manibhadreswar temple at Bhubaneswar and Nilakantheswar temple at Denua, Sri Narasimha is the Parswadevata. In Puri, the association of Narasimha with Siva is intimately noticed. Near all the Narasimha temples, there are Siva temples. Near Chakra Narasimha temple, there is Panchabati Siva temple. Similarly, near Pandu Narasimha temple, there is Jameswar temple, and inside the Jagamohan of Jameswar temple there is the image of Narasimha. In the temples of Lokanath and Kapalalochana, the images of Narasimha are there.

A Narasimha image was found in the earth while the digging of the compound at Grameswar Siva temple in Kanchi Sasana was going on. The beautiful image was made of chlorite. Another interesting feature of this Siva temple is that there is a Narayan image at the right door-jamb as Dwarapala. Another peculiarity of this temple is that animal sacrifice was given during Dasahara every year at the sanctum of this Siva temple. This shows the close association of tantricism [a degeneration of Vaishnavism].

Another resemblance between Lord Narasimha and Siva is the Ugra form. The Vidarana Narasimha is Ugra as Lokanath of Puri, on whose name the local people fear to take vow. In some Puranas, Siva is Kirtimukha. In some Narasimha images there is Kirtimukha. Ananta is sometimes described as Sankarsana or Siva, as well as Narasimha. Eschmann has rightly pointed out a Saiva element in Narasimha which probably also led to his worship as a tutelary god of the latter Gangas.

H.V. Stetencorn narrated that in western Orissa, people give more emphasis to the Narasimha aspect of Visnu and the trend was finally found in the Jagannath cult of Puri. G.C. Tripathy has stressed the Tantric element, which instigated the devolvement of the Narasimha cult from Vaisnavism. They see some affinity between Lord Jagannath's body and the Lord Narasimha's appearance from the pillar. Eschmann has postulated that the head of Lord Jagannath may be symbolic of a lion head, with the Lord's round eyes being typical features of Lord Narasimha's. According to Indradyumna legend, the satiated god assumed the form of Saumya Narasimha with chakra and bow in His uplifted hands, with His two main hands on the knees. Balabhadra covers the head of Narasimha with a thousand hoods.

Narasimha is the guardian Deity of the temple and all the performances, from cooking to puja, are preceded by offering to Lord Narasimha first. The initiation by a new servitor (sadhibandha) starts with worshipping the Khamba Narasimha (image of Laxmi-Narasimha) on the first pillar of Jagamohana. The Palia Pujapanda sits at this pillar and offers the bhoga of the public to Narasimha, then to the Lord, and at the time of pahuda (door-closed), offerings are also given here.

Lord Narasimha is described as the protector of Lord Jagannath, and the protector of Nandighosha chariot. It is customary that a wooden image of Narasimha after due ritual (rath-pratistha), completed by the deula-purohit, the only strotriya Brahmin servitor of the temple, is to be brought with proper procession with bijekahali and other vadyas to the chariots (Hanuman and Bhubaneswari for Balabhadra and Subhadra, respectively).

Lord Narasimha is also one of the nine parswadevatas of the said chariot. In the



Nabakalebara the role of Lord Narasimha is indispensable. The new images of the Lords are to be consecrated in presence of Narasimha and trees selected for image making are to be cut also in the presence of Narasimha. These rituals are called as banajaga.

In all these above rituals, Mantraraja, the Mantra of Lord Narasimha, are only to be recited by the Brahmins. Yajna- Narasimha is associated in the process of the journey of the logs of the Lord. Narasimha is one of the Vesas of the Lord on the 13th day of the month of Kartik and Lord Jagannatha is worshipped as Narasimha on the 14th day of lunar fortnight of the month of Vaishakha (Narasimha Chaturdasi).

Angyamala (garland) of the Lord is taken on this day to Chakra Narasimha for His birthday-celebration. The birthday celebration of Narasimha is celebrated at the temple of Narasimha, near Muktimandap. On the said day, Lord Narasimha's image (from Dakshinighar) visits Jagannath Ballav Math. On the 9th day of the lunar fortnight of the month of Srabana and the 14th day of lunar fortnight of the month of Margasira, Laxmi-Narasimha move around the city.

Lord Narasimha is treated as the embodiment of valour and energy. Sometimes Sudarsan is linked with Narasimha. Sudarsan is the Ugra aspect and the working force. Similarly, Narasimha is the Ugra form of Visnu. When Sudarsan is consecrated, it is recited that he belongs to Narasimha group. Representation in sculpture is made on the combined aspect of

Narasimha and Sudarsan. Sudarsan in the form of the wheel is found at the back of the image of Narasimha in the sculpture Chakra Narasimha. Sudarsan is the moveable image of Narasimha. It is claimed by scholars that Jagannath and Narasimha are inseparable, and all the four Deities of Jagannath pantheon are linked intimately with Narasimha: Balabhadra as Ananta, Subhadra as post, Sudarsan as fury and Jagannath as Narasimha, speak the story of intimacy of Narasimha in Jagannath consciousness.

The Narasimha sculptures found at Puri are two-armed to twenty-armed images. Important among them are the Garuda-tosana Narasimha, eight-armed Pandu Narasimha, Narasimha sitting on Garuda. All the parswadevatas are in vidarana posture. These images are made of different varieties of stones, but chlorite is common. Metal images of the jaggharas and maths are of astadhātu. Some of these institutions worship the salagramas with Narasimha, chakra and sankha drawn upon them, and are also called Chitra Narasimha.

It is unique in Puri that the amalgamation of several cults are found here. This includes safely the Narasimha Upasana. The most common images of Lord Narasimha found in Puri are Laxmi-Narasimha in utkurita posture. The Ugra aspect of the Deity is not there, rather it represents elements in the character of Purusottama.

ISKON Temple, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar.



Puja Rituals in Srimandir

Padmanabha Mahapatra

Shri Jagannath in Yantra, Tantra and Mantra

The mode of worship of Sri Jagannath is unique and different from that of the other Vishnu temples, situated in north and south India. Sri Jagannath is *Pranab*; He has been identified with the mystic *Vedic Bijamantra 'Om'*. His puja has been developed and systematized in a well designed- process by coordinating the basics of Vedic, Tantric and Vaisnavite streams. Dharmashastras prescribe three main streams for the puja of Hindu Devas, those are - Nigam, Agam and Lokacar. Nigam is the pure Vedic system, Agam is the tantric system and Lokacar is the combination of both or some other system, which is followed with reference to the prevailing conditions of the locality, time and authorities.

Nigam - (the Vedic system) - The guide for Vedic Upasana (Nigam) is Karmakanda; which concentrates mainly on Japa, Jaga and Yagnya (fire sacrifice). - '*Swatah pramanswarup Veden nischitartho nigamyate gnayeta iti atah Vedah Nigamah, Nigamyate gnayete anena iti Nigamah.*' (Devi Bhagavat - 1-5-61)

Agam (Tantra) - Agam or Tantra Sastra is very much elaborate and contains the multiple system of Upasana. The proper meaning of the term Agam is that which has come out of the

mouth of Siva; that which has entered into the mouth of Uma; and that which is the opinion of Vishnu. - '*Agatam Sivamukhabjat gam tu Girija mukhe, matam ch Basudevasya tasmad Agama uchyate*'. So Agam or Tantra Sastra is mainly based on three aspects, such as - Saivism; (Saivagam) Saktism (Saktagam) and Vaishnavism (Vaishnavagam). Agam or Tantra Sastra is a means for over all development of human society - '*Dharmarth kamamokhyadi chaturbarga sadhan pathpradarshak.*'

'Tantra aims to transform every action in life into a ritual, so that the individual performs every action and thought with a feeling of worship and awareness. The action of bathing, dressing, sitting for worship, offering various symbolic sacrifices, sexual relations, stages of development from inception to womb, birth to marriage etc. are transformed into worship. The aim of Tantra is to unleash the cosmic energy in man, so that he rises to higher level of awareness.' ('A systematic course in ancient Tantric Techniques of Yoga and Kriya' - Swami Satyananda Saraswati-P.P. - 335 /336)

Tantra has been divided into 64 parts - '*Chatuhsasthi ch Tantrani*'. Over and above that, saints such as Kapila, Jaimini, Basistha, Pulastya, Bhrugu, Yagnyabalkya, Sukra and Brihaspati etc. have written huge number of



Upaantras also. Tantric system has some Acaras; out of them Bamacara and Kaulacara are most important. Bamacara is not suitable for Vaishnavite system. In Tantra, Yantra and Mantra play the major role.

Yantra - Yantra is the body of the deity. Puja of a deity is required to be taken up on a Yantra, so Yantra is very important. '*Sarbeshameb Devanam Yantrapuja Prasashyate*' (Gautami Tantra). Without a Yantra, Puja can not be taken up. If the Yantra is not known then eight-petalled lotus is to be accepted as Yantra and the puja is to be undertaken accordingly. '*Bina Yantren chet puja Devata na prasidati, Anuktakalpe Yantram tu likhet Padmadalastakam*'. (Gautami Tantra)

Mantra - Mantra is the soul of the deity on a Yantra. - '*Mantrayate guptam paribhasate iti Mantrah*'. Mantra is secrete, to be learnt from the best Guru. The sound of the Mantras being chanted combined with the power of the resolve made by the person performing the Puja, reaches the divine power that converts the chants into the desired blessings. It is a must that Mantras are very powerful. But they must be chanted in a balanced note and rhythm. - '*Manah santoshanam saucham maunam mantrarth chintanam, Abyagramanirbedah japam-sapatti hetabah*'.

Mantras in a gross level are special sound patterns. On a deeper sense they are still much more. Along with Mandalas and Yantras, Mantras are most important and considered as the essence of the practical Tantra. Mantras and Yantras (Mandalas) are utilized in conjunction with each other to form powerful combination. A Mandala, Yantra or Devata is the form of consciousness. The Mandalas, Yantras or Devatas are the manifested forms, configurations of Shakti, while the Mantra, which is also Shakti, is the link

between consciousness and form. This system applies to every thing in the world around us. The visible form is the expression, while the Mantra is the vehicle of expression. Mantra is the direct link with the beyond.

The deities on the Simhasana of Srimandira have been placed on specific Yantras; Sri Balabhadra on Tara Yantra, Sri Subhadra on Bhubaneswari Yantra and Sri Jagannatha on Kali Yantra. The Daru Devatas (made of wood) themselves are Tantrics, because their construction has been made on Tantric background, with reference to Matsya Purana, Sanatkumar Samhita, Biswamitra Samhita and Hayasirsha Samhita etc., all Tantric Texts. The Vimana of Sri Mandir is a Siddha Pitha and the deities are the Siddha Yantras. To keep the Yantras; engines moving; the presence of a perfectly trained and experienced Yantree or Engineer is always required; he is the Pujak in the literature of Sri Mandira and he is charged on Tantra. '*Mananatt Mantrah*' Mantra is very difficult; it can only be learnt from perfect Gurus or teachers; and it is the only means to take up Puja in a systematic manner. Who are the Gurus then ? They are Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswar. From the above analogy we conclude that in the Puja Paddhati of Srimandira, Guru is there in place of Mantra; Pujak is there in place of Tantra and the deities are there in place of Yantras.

System of Pancaratram Pujapaddhati

Narada Purana mentions that the Puja of Sri Purusottama was being undertaken according to the tenets of Pancaratra system during the time of king Indradyumna. The same system with some additions and alterations continues even at present. Among the different disciplines of Vaishnava worship the system of Pancaratram holds a very prominent position. The Supreme Narayana himself, who in turn taught it to Uddhab within



the span of five nights, directly imparted it to Sage Narad. Pancaratram literature glorifies image worship as even superior to the Vedas. Whatever that may be, under this system, the idols have been held as very necessary to conceive and meditate on God.

Texts on Pujapaddhati

Some ritual texts exhibiting the mode of worship of Jagannath, as available at present are mentioned below.

Gajapati Purusottama Dev (1466-1497 A.D), the famous Gajapati king of Ganga dynasty, compiled 'Gopalarchanavidhi' on the rites and rituals of Sri Jagannatha and 'Muktichintamani' on the sanctity of Purusottama Puri. Gopalarchanavidhi otherwise known as 'Niladrinatha Pujavidhi' and 'Niladri mahodayarcanavidhi' have been compiled on the Vaishnava Skandha of Agamakalpataru.

Narasimha Mishra Vajpeyee (1525-1580 A.D) was the famous Smrti writer and royal preceptor of Gajapati Prataparudra Dev (1497-1533AD). Out of his 18 voluminous works 'Nityacarapradeepa' was the best and it has been published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1928. Nityacarapradeepa has been divided into 4 parts excluding its Parivasa Prakaran. In this work the author described in detail, about all the temples, tirthas, lakes, Gods and Goddesses of Srikhetra. Therein he has suggested for worshipping Sri Balabhadra in Sankarshana mantra, Sri Jagannatha in Krishna mantra and Goddess Subhadra in Devi mantra.

Gadadhar Rajguru Mahapatra (1700-1750 AD) was a reputed Smrti writer, his compiled work 'Gadadharpaddhati' has also been published by the Asiatic society in 1904 and 1908. In his 'Kalasar,' in the Mangalacaran he has started with praying Lord Jagannath and mother Vimala. Sri Gautamiya Tantra is another

work, stated to have been originated at Purusottam Khetra; it has also much influence on the puja system of Sri Jagannath.

Niladri Mahodaya is a very popular work. It states the origin, rites and rituals of Sri Jagannath. But the period of its compilation and about its actual author are not yet definite. Some say that it was compiled at the time of Ganga king Bhanudev IV (1414-1435 AD), but this book as a reference is not found to have been quoted by any author of Orissa till 18th century. So it comes to one's mind that it is a later compilation. Niladri Mahodaya contains 91 chapters, dealing in detail with all the rites and rituals and day-to-day functions in Jagannath temple. It is a compilation based on all Dharmasastras, Puranas and Tantras etc., hence it is called as 'Sthala Purana' in Orissa. However, the latest compilation of Niladri Mahodaya along with its Oriya translation has been edited by Dr B.K Swain and published by Sadgrantha Niketan, Puri recently in two volumes and available in the market.

Over and above all references cited above, the fairs and festivals, rites and rituals of Sri Jagannath Temple have been discussed in the following works.

- (a) Gopalarchanapaddhati by Sri Basudev Tripathy (1700- 1750 AD).
- (b) Kalanirnaya - by Sri Raghunath Das (1715-1750 AD)
- (c) Kalsarvasva - by Sri Krishna Mishra (1750 AD)
- (d) Virasarvasva - by Sri Gopinath Tripathy (1778 AD)
- (e) Bamdev Samhita - Published by Muktimandap Pandit Sava, Puri during 1972.
- (f) Surisarvasva - by - Govinda Kabibhusana Samantaray; edited by Sri Bhagaban Panda



and published by Orissa State Museum (published in 2 parts in 1974 and 1994)

All such texts except 'Surisarvasva' have broadly dealt with the puja systems of Sri Jagannath only, but there are no ancient independent ritual texts exhibiting the detailed mode of worship of Sri Balabhadra and Subhadra. Even though there are some independent temples of Balabhadra / Baladev in some places of Orissa, which are of later origin, the Pujaks thereof state that they follow the similar mode of worship to that of Puri temple. One small text 'Surisarvasvokta Sri Basudev Pujapaddhatih' compiled by Pandit Sri Jameswara Mishra Sharma around fifty years back exhibit the puja system of only Sri Balabhadra.

The Tantric texts of other states of India, which have much similarity with the puja system of Sri Jagannath, are 'Saradatilak' and 'Karmadipika'. Saradatilak of Laxman Desika seems to be a composition of middle of the 10th century. The mode of worship of Srikrishna-Trailokyamohan, recommended in this work has much similarity with the worship of Purusottama Jagannath and it is compatibility to the religious notions of Orissa. 'Karmadipika' of Kesava Bhatt Kashmirika, a follower of Nimbarka School of Visnuism, is a composition of 14th century. This text is more authoritative on the worship of Gopal Krishna with the eighteen-syllabic and ten-syllabic Mantras. It does not accept Radha as the consort of Krishna but considers Rukmini and Satyabhama as His legitimate wives. The influence of 'Karmadipika' on the Puja system of Jagannath is much more than any other text.

In the entire Pancaratra there is only one text i.e. 'Parasara Samhita' that mentions about Sri Jagannath of Purusottam Khetra. As in the 'Jagannath Khetramahatmya' of 'Skanda Puran',

the Parasara Samhita quotes the integrated form of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra. - *'Jagannatheti bamangam Balaramardharupinam / Subhadrakhya-Mahalaxmi rupasardhangabeshinam // xxxx Tam paraparamabyaktam namami Purusottamam'.*// Here Goddess Subhadra has been accepted as Goddess Laxmi, who blesses the world with auspicious boons.

Feeling of a common man -

When a normal devotee hears the puja proceedings in Jagannath temple, he feels that the puja mantras are partly Vedic, partly Tantric and partly Puranic. The Vedic part is the use of 'Om', at the initiation of the puja -mantra; the Tantric part is the use of 'Klim' for Jagannath - 'Hrim' for Subhadra, 'Slim' for Balabhadra after utterance of 'Om'. The Puranic part is - Krishna - Jagannath, Basudev - Balabhadra, Bhubaneswari - Subhadra. Sudarshan is formless, Turiya (gap between two recitation of Om), He is considered as 'Jyotibrahma'.

System of worship followed at present -

The seriatim of puja (Pujakrama) is almost equal in respect of all the major deities placed on the Ratnasimhasan. Only we find variation in the Mulamantra, Devata Nyasa, Pitha Nyasa, Mantra Nyas and Murtipanjara Nyas mantras in respect of each of them, those are exhibited in the following chart. As regards the Avarans (Associates) of each deity, the factual position has been explained just below the chart worked out. So far as the Bhuta Suddhi, Pranab; Pran Pratistha, Martka Nyasa are concerned, the basic mantras are the guidelines. The Upacara puja includes 16 Upacaras starting from Asana to Vandana as exhibited in the succeeding paragraphs. Dhyan mantras of all the four deities are incorporated in the last paragraph of this article.



	Balabhadra	Subhadra	Jagannath
References	Basudev Puja Paddhati	Bhubaneswari Puja Paddhati	Gopalarchana Puja Paddhati
Mantra	Dwadasakhyar Basudev Mantra 'Om Namoh Bhagabate Vasudevaya'	Ekakhyari Bhubaneswari Mantra 'Hrim'	Astadasakhyar Gopal Mantra 'Om Klim Krishnaya Govindaya Gopijan Ballavaya'
Devata Nyasa	Srikanthadi Nyasa	Kala Nyasa	Keshavadi Nyasa
Pitha Nyasa	-do -	- do -	- do -
Mantra Nyasa	Basudev Mantra	Bhubaneswari Mantra	Gopal Mantra
Murtipanjara Nyasa	- do -	- do -	- do - Bibhuti Panjar Nyasa

As regards Sri Sudarshan there is a specific mantra, He is referred to as a thousand - spoked one Sahasrara. - 'Om Sahasrara Hum Phat'. His puja includes the violent aspects of Vishnu and contain many elements of worship of Narasimha.

Abaranas (Associates) of the deities - After completion of bath, offering of clothes, sacred threads, ornaments, flowers and sandal pastes etc. to the main four deities, the puja of their Abaranas are to be undertaken. This is the worship of the associates of the deities, who surround them in shape of a circle.

Seven Abaranas of Sri Jagannath - (1) His close friends in 1st Abarana - Dama, Sudam, Vasudam and Kinkini. (2) 2nd Abarana - Hrdaya, Siras, Sikha, Kavaca and Astra portion of the Mulamantra. (3) 3rd Abarana - Eight wives of Srikrishna (4) 4th Abarana - Real and foster parents of Krishna, Balabhadra, Subhadra; cowherds and Cow - mandeis. (5) 5th Abarana - Five Kalpavrkas, celestial Vrindavana. (6) 6th Abarana - Eight Bhaktas, disciples of Krishna. (7) 7th Abarana - Dignals with their weapons, vahans (carriers) and family members.

Seven Abaranas of Sri Balabhadra - (1) 1st Abarana - Twelve syllabic mulamantra, (2) 2nd Abarana - 12 Vishnu connected with 12 months - Keshav, Narayan, Madhab, Govind, Vishnu, Madhusudan, Tribikram, Baman, Sridhar, Hrsikesa, Padmanabha and Damodar, (3) 3rd Abarana - 12 corresponding Shaktis - Kirti, Kanti, Tusti, Pusti, Dhrti, Ksanti, Kriya, Daya, Medha, Harsa, Saraddha and Lajja, (4) 4th Abarana - four Atmas, (5) 5th Abarana - Balabhadra Himself in the middle, (6) 6th Abarana - All Dignals with their weapons (7) 7th Abarana - Ayudhas of Balabhadra.

Seven Abaranas of Subhadra - (1) 1st Abarana - Monosyllabic Mantra 'Hrim', (2) 2nd Abarana - on east, south, west, north of Her-Gagan, Rakta, Karalika, Mahatsukama, (3) 3rd Abarana - on six corners of hexagon, from east clockwise- Gayatri, Savitri. Visnu, Saraswati, Siva and Brahma, (4) 4th Abarana - on 8-petals of the first lotus - Anangakusuma, Anangakusumatura, Bhuvanpalika, Gaganvesika, Sasirekha, Gaganrekha, Karali and Vikarali, (5) 5th Abarana - 16 deities on 16-petalled lotus, from eastern side moving clockwise -Uma,



Saraswati, Sri, Durga, Jaya, Smrti, Dhrti, Medha, Mati, Kanti, Anangamadan, Anangamadanatura, Bhubanesa, Bhubanpalika, Sarvasisira and Anangavedana and 8 mothers outside the lotus, Astamatrkas, starting from east- Brahmani (east), Maheswari (south-east), Kumari (south), Vaisnabi (south-west), Barahi (west), Indrani (north-west), Camunda (north), Laxmi (north-east), (6) 6th Abarana - 8 Dignals with their weapons, (7) 7th Abarana - Ayudhas- Sayudha and Savahan.

Five Abaranas of Sri Sudarshan - (1) 1st Abarana - 4 deities in four directions - Acakra (south-east), Vicakra (south-west), Sucakra (north-west), Adhicakra (north-east). This Abarana is treated as 'Angavaran' (2) 2nd Abarana - 8 weapons hold in eight hands - Simple Namaskar Mantra 'Om Sankhaya Namah' with regards to 8 weapons hold by Him in His eight hands - Sankha, Cakra, Gada, Padma, Sara, Dhanus, Pasa and Ankusa. (3) 3rd Abarana - 8 main Shaktis of Visnu - Laxmi, Saraswati, Rati, Priti, Kirti, Kanti, Tusti and Pusti. (4) 4th Abarana - 8 Dignals - Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirrti, Varun, Vayu, Kuber, Isana. (5) 5th Abarana - Ayudhas of the deity.

Pancopacar and Shodasopacar Puja

By the term Puja we mean to offer some food items to God; the item due for offering to God is called 'Naivedya'; after the food items already offered to God it is turned to Prasad, but in the temple of Sri Jagannath it is Mahaprasad. Puja in Jagannath temple is termed as Dhoop. The literal meaning of Dhoop is incense. The pujas are undertaken behind the closed doors and the public are not allowed to see to it; when after puja; the doors are opened; the sanctum becomes smoky with descent incense; for this reason here puja has been termed as Dhoop.

In the temple of Jagannatha Puja is normally offered six times in a day. Gopal Ballav Bhoga,

the morning breakfast at 9 AM; Bhogamandap bhoga, for public sale at 11 AM and Badasimhar bhoga, a light dinner at 11.45 PM; are small pujas consisting of only five Upacaras. Sakal Dhoop, the morning meal at 10 AM; Madhyahna Dhoop, the mid - day meal at 1PM and Sandhya Dhoop, the evening meal at 8 PM are exhaustive pujas consisting of sixteen Upacaras.

Seriatim of rites observed during Puja (Pujakrama)

The formal rites before the initiation of the puja on Ratna Simhasan in Srimandir, are (1) Baishnabadi Samskar i.e. fire sacrifice in the temple kitchen, (2) Puja of Surya Cakra i.e. Sun God situated in the south-east direction (agneya kona) of the temple premises and (3) Puja of Door Attendants (Dwarpals) in front of the Jay-Bijay Dwar.

Three Pujapandas take up the pujas on Ratna Simhasan. The senior most Pujapanda performs the worship of Sri Jagannath, so also the puja of Sudarsan, Sridevi and Bhudevi. Other two Pujapandas take up the pujas of Sri Balabhadra and Sri Subhadra respectively.

Preliminaries - The worshippers just after their arrival on the platform sprinkle some scented water on the ground and utter the Mulamantra; this is called Bhumisuddhi. They sit either in Padmasana or in Svastikasana on a wooden stool, on the right side of the deities facing towards the images, so that they face towards the north, while the deities face towards the east. The next item is Vighnotsarana, removal of obstacles. Then they seek permission from the Bhairava. Sastras codify that Bhairava is the guardian of the Khetra so also of the temple. Next is Ghanta Pujanam - Ringing of the hand bell -This indicates that the puja begins; Ghanta also drives away all the demons from the spot. The next preparation is Pujopakarana - Drabya-Samsthapana-this is arrangement of puja articles.



Ritual purification of the self - Samanyarghya Vidhi (Preparation of holy water), Asana Suddhi (Purification of the seat), Kara Suddhi (Kara suddhi is smearing the palms with some sandal- paste, then having taken a flower, rubbing the same with utterance of the mantra 'Sudarsanaya Astraya Phat'), Dasa Diga Bandhan, Bhuta Suddhi (Purification of the elements of the body), Pranab, Prana Pratistha (Establishment of the vital breaths; Kara nyasa; Deha nyasa etc of the Mantra; meditation on Pranasakti), Pranayam (The regulation of vital breaths), Matruka Nyasa (Touching of various parts of the body by right hand palm and finger tops; along with chanting of appropriate mantras). Antarmatruka and Bhirmatruka both to be covered.)

Deification of the self - Devata Nyasa (Srikanthadi Nyasa for Balabhadra; Kala Nyasa for Subhadra, and Keshbadi Nyasa for Jagannath), Tattwa Nyasa (The worshipper has to identify the body part by part with the whole universe with all the mundane and the Devine on it), Bhabanacastayam / Pitha Nyasa (Muladhar bhabana; Hridaya bhabana; Hasta bhabana and Deha bhabana), Mantra Nyasa (Basudev mantra for Balabhadra, Bhubaneswari mantra for Subhadra and Gopal mantra for Jagannath), Murtipanjara Nyasa (Placing of alphabets inside and outside the body for identification with Brahma Basudev mantra for Balabhadra, Bhubaneswari mantra for Subhadra and Gopal mantra - Bibhuti Panjara Nyasa for Jagannath).

Antaryaga (mental or internal worship) - the worshipper establishes the image of Krisna-Jagannath in his heart, undertakes an internal fire-sacrifice and offers Him mental worship. In course of conducting such action the Cakra in the Muladhar is considered as the Vedi and the deity is imagined as the fire burning on it.

Preparation for external worship - Arghya Samskar (Vishesarghya Bidhi), Upacar Samskar

(Sanctification of upacars by Bikhana; Prokhana; Tadana; Abagunthana; Dhenumudra; Mahamudra and recitation of Mulamantra), Atmapitha puja, Suddhitrayam (The purification of the worshipper; the Mantra and the Deity).

Realization of the deity and Actual worship - Devata Pithapuja - Yantra puja, invocation of the deities; Establishment of the deities; Prana Pratistha; Nyasas on the bodies of the deities; exhibiting the Mudras of the deities; (abahan; sthapana; sanniddhana; sannirodha; sakalikiranana; abagunthana; dhenumudra; amrutikaran; mahamudra; paramikiranana; these are the ten mudras).

Upacar Puja -(offering of the following upacars) -- Asanam (Offering of seat), Swagatam-(Extending welcome), Padya -(Providing water for foot washing), Arghya -(Providing water for face washing), Acamaniya -(Providing water for mouth rinsing), Madhuparka -(Mixture of honey and other items), Punah Acamana -(Rinsing of mouth on subsequent occasion), Snana -(Taking Bath on exhibition of Snana mudra), Bastra and Yajnopavita -(Offering of dresses and provision of sacred threads), Abarana -(Offering of ornaments to the deities), Gandha -(Offering of sandal paste and other scented materials), Puspa -(Offering of varieties of flowers), Puspanjali -(Offering of five Puspanjalis), Abarana Puja (from first Abarana to Seventh Abarana, as discussed earlier, this is an interruption in between the Upacar Puja), Dhoop -(Offering of incense), Deepa -(Showing of candle pot to the deities), Naivedya -(Naivedya samskar; offering of Naivedya to the deities, showing Naivedya mudra with mantrochattan; Japa or muttering of the mantra; providing water for ablution to the deities; acamana; offering of tambula and aratrikam.), Candanaivedya -(Bahyabali).

Concluding rites - Prasannarca -(Keeping the deities in full charming attitude),



Aratrikam- (This is the main lustration.), Bandanas - (Prayers after completion of all upcaras symbolizing the deities as royal authorities), Brahmārpana -(Atmasamaparna before God), Hinapurānam - (Making good of all shortcomings), Nirmalya Grahānam and Prasad Sebanam etc, Pradakhina and Namaskaram.

Dhyana Mantra of Sri Balabhadra -

*'Om Vishnu saradacandrakotisadrusam
sankhasthangam gadam, Ambhojam dadhantam
sitabjanayanam kanlyajaganmohanam
Abaddhangadaharkundalmahamaulisphuratkananam
Sribatsankamudarkaustubhadharam bande
munindreih stutam'*

And

*'Shantam chandradikantam mushalahaladharam
basudevagrajantam - Vogisham charubaktram
bishadharmukutam sebitam devabrundeih
Bandeaham lokanatham tribhubanabiditam
sarbasiddhipradanam Ramamabhiram
bikasitabandanam rebatiprananatham.'*

Dhyana Mantra of Sri Subhadra -

*'Yasajabakusuma patakdiyamurtim
Pashankushambhayabarana nijabahudandyih.
Aashodashakhyakalaya nija padmabasa
Ekakhyari tribhubanadhipatinamasthe.'*

Dhyana Mantra of Sri Jagannath -

*'Phulendibaramindukantibadanam bahambatamspriyam,
Sribatsankmudarkaustubhadharam pitambaram sundaram
Gopinam nayanotpalarchitatanum gogopasanghabrutam
Gobindam kalabenubadanparam dibyangbhusham bhaje.'*

Dhyana Mantra of Sri Sudarshan-

*'Sarbabyabsampurnamstabahum Sudarshanam
Astayudhaparibarmastakhyarasamanwitam.
Astarm chakramlyugram mushalam
chankushayudham
Bamtah shankhashikhinu dharayantam karambuyeih
Raktachandanliptangam raktagadhanulepanam
Raktabastraparidhanam raktamalabibhushitam.
Agra pingalakonakhyam jwalamalatihishanam
Danstrakaralbadanam bhayasyapi bhayabaham
Sudarsanabhidhanam tam cakramadhy bichintayet.'*

Pujaka - The Worshipper

He, who offers the upacaras and naivedya to the deities, is known as Pujaka, a Pujapanda, in the language of Sri Jagannath temple. As the Pujapaddhati followed here is based on Vedic culture; he can also be called as an Acharya. By performing Asana Suddhi; Bhuta Suddhi; Kar Nyasa and Deha Nyasa of the mantra; meditation on Pranasakti; Prana pratistha; Kara Suddhi; Pranayama; Antarmatraka and Bahirmatraka Nyasas etc; the Pujak initially attributes godly qualities in himself and then undertakes the puja of the deities.

An Acharya must have been born in a high family, he must have acquired thorough knowledge in Vedas; Upanishads; Vedangas; Smrutis; Agamas and specifically on the Pancaratra puja system. He must be a man with full faith and devotion to God and well-versed on Vedic as well as Tantric mantras. He should be a married person; maintain perfect health and there may not be any physical deformities in him. He must be performing his daily routine works; snana; suddha bastra paridhan; bandana; tarpana; baiswadeva; sandhya and gayatri etc. with all devotions and then proceed to the temple premises for Devarchana. In the Niladri Mahodaya, Chapter 38 to 89 specifies the daily rituals to be undertaken by a Pujaka before proceeding to take up the puja of Sri Jagannath. He is to be compassionate; pious; righteous; peaceful; truthful and helpful. He has to maintain a pure and simple life style without involving himself in any unethical matters and observe a spiritual code of conduct in his personal private life. So he is the Pujaka of Sri Jagannath and to be respected by one and all.

Padmanabha Mahapatra is the Sri Mandira Purohit. He lives in Pratihari Lane, Matimandap Sahi, Puri.

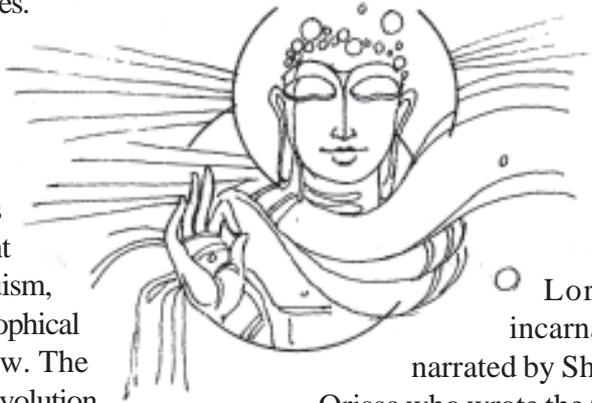


Lord Buddha in Jagannath Cult

Prabhat Kumar Nanda

The culture of Lord Jagannath is meant for the universal brotherhood. It is the synthesis of all walks of religious and cultural heritage of the world. Scholars of different religions and faiths of Hinduism visited Puri, the abode of Lord Jagannath, popularly known as Shree Kshetra i.e., best of all religious place. "Avataravada" or the theory of incarnations is also aimed at the synthesis of cultural and scientific virtues.

The concept of Avataravada is a psychological approach to determine the process of creation. Ten incarnations as vividly described in different religious scriptures of Hinduism, can be analysed from philosophical and scientific point of view. The theory of Darwin about the evolution of lives on the earth and gradual development of human society have been depicted in the concept of Avataravada. Out of ten incarnations, Buddha has been accepted as the ninth incarnation. The literary meaning of the Buddha is the Enlightened One. In the general parlance, the learned man is called as Buddha in the society. Lord Buddha as the incarnation of Vishnu, is not mentioned in any of the Vedas or Samhitas. Such mention is also not found in



Brahmanas and Upanisads. In the later Vedic literature, some references of Buddha are found in the narrations as Pratibodha, Baudhayana as mentioned in Baudhayana Srauta Sutra and Baudhiputra of Brhadaranyaka Upanisad. But all above as mentioned have no relation with Gautam Buddha the ninth incarnation. There is the mention of Bodha the name of a saint in the

Mantrapatha. But on careful analysis, it is observed that it has no relationship with incarnation of Buddha.

The importance of Lord Buddha as ninth incarnation was prominently narrated by Shri Jayadeva, the poet of Orissa who wrote the Gitagovinda in Sanskrit language during 12th Century. The description of Buddha incarnation in the first canto of Gitagovinda is as follow :

*"Nindasi Yajna Bidherah Ham Shrutijatam
Sadaya Hrudaya Darshrita Pashughatam,
Keshab Dhruta! "Buddha Shareera, Jaya
Jagadeesha Hare".*

The meaning of above version can be expressed as, "He, who had the reprimand to



conventional systems of religious rites (Yajna) and sacrifice of innocent animals in it with the compassionate heart resulting in the incarnation accepted by the Almighty (Keshab) in the form of Buddha and cheers for Jagadeesha Hare (the Master of the Universe)." The above stanza written in Sanskrit language by the poet Jayadeva has proved the importance of the incarnation of Buddha as a reformer in the Hindu culture and further proclaimed that, Lord Krishna and Lord Jagannath are the same.

Some historians made efforts to prove the existence of Buddha from the period of Vedas, due to mention of the name Buddha in different religious scriptures. Harivamsa and Bhagabat Gita are silent about Buddha incarnation. In Padmapurana, it is mentioned that Lord Vishnu took the Buddha form, teaching the doctrine of delusion to destroy the demons. As per Agnipurana, as the son of Sudhodhana, Lord Vishnu removed the demons as the symbol of Mayamoha. In Garuda Purana, it is mentioned that, Lord Vishnu will take birth as the Buddha, the son of Jina to diminish the foes of God. In the Bhagabat Purana, Buddha has been depicted as the future incarnation after incarnation of Risabha, the first Jaina Tirthankar. Vishnu would incarnate as Buddha as the son of Ajana in the kingdom of Magadha. The mission of such incarnation as mentioned in Bhagabat Purana was to remove demons. Some times the confusion arose as some historians tried to establish Buddha as Jaina. Such ideas must have come to some scholars to prove Lord Vishnu as the incarnator of Buddha and Jaina. The efforts to derive the existence of Buddha from Vedic period was not successful in the pages of history of the world.

The presence of idols of Lord Jagannath in the places of ninth incarnation in Jagannath temple at Puri proves the deep connection of Lord Buddha with Lord Jagannath. While entering the

Jagannath temple the attention of the visitors are attracted to the idols of ten incarnations on the upper part of the Lions Gate (Singha Dwara). In the place of ninth incarnation i.e., after Haladhara and before Kalki, the idol of Lord Jagannath is placed in the place of Lord Buddha. Hence, as per the scholars the devotees of Lord Jagannath have accepted Gautam Buddha as that of Lord Jagannath. The second evidence is found inside Jagamohana (the assembly hall) of the Jagannath temple. On the left hand side of Garudastambha images of ten incarnations have been made on the wall. In the place of ninth incarnation in the place of Gautam Buddha the image of Lord Jagannath has been postured. But the style of construction of images is a departure from the general style of construction of images of Lord Jagannath. However, the above two evidences prove that, the devotees of Lord Jagannath have accepted the relation of Lord Buddha with Lord Jagannath. Some historians also believe that the "Brahma" i.e., the sacred soul present inside the idol of Lord Jagannath is the tooth relic of Lord Buddha.

It is astonishing that, though the birth day of Rama, Vamana and Krishna as the incarnations of Shri Jagannath have been celebrated in the Jagannath temple as important festivals, the birth day of Lord Buddha (on the sacred day of Buddha Purnima) is never celebrated in the temple. While analysing the cause of the above, it is presumed that Gautam Buddha who was born at Lumbini during 623 B.C. was not the same. According some scholars, like that of Jaina religion and birth of many religious masters as Tirthankars, in the Buddhist religion also a number of religious masters in the name of Buddha were born in different years. Hence, according to them, Gautam Buddha of 623 B.C. was the 20th religious master in the Buddha tradition. He was called as the Sarba Buddha Maya Purusottama.



Certain rites which are prohibited in other temples of Lord Vishnu as a departure from the practising rites of Hindu temples have been accepted in Jagannath temple due to the influence of Buddhism. The influence of Buddhism in the temple of Lord Jagannath can be mentioned as follow :

1. Garlanding of the Image

In Buddhism, garlands are never offered around the neck of the image of the Buddha. Garlands are only offered at the lotus feet of Buddha. Accordingly, in Jagannath temple, garlands are never offered covering the neck of Lord Jagannath. Garlands are only offered on the hands and at the lotus feet of Lord Jagannath.

2. Offering of Lamps

In Buddha culture, the offering of burning lamp is mandatory. Such practice is very much found in the temple of Lord Jagannath on higher side in comparison to other Vishnu temples of India.

3. Importance of Car Festival

The Car Festival is one of the important festivals in Buddha temples. The symbol of wheels of the car are one of the most important symbols of Buddhism. The full moon day in the month of Asadha, is named in Buddhism as "Dharma Chakra Prabartana Divasa" i.e., the day of activation/implementation of religious wheels. The car festival in the tradition of Lord Jagannath is the most important festival and there is no other festival superior to the car festival observed in the temple of Lord Jagannath.

4. Offering of food to Deity

Like that of the food culture of Lord Jagannath temple, there is the practice of offering delicious food before idol of Lord Buddha. Like that of the food prepared in the temple of Lord Jagannath i.e., rice, dal, curry etc., such type of foods are also offered before Lord Buddha. Some scholars believe that, the influence of Buddhism i.e., as the casteless society and the practice of taking food by all devotees in the Buddha Vihar, culture of Lord Jagannath has been influenced. In the Ananda Bazar of Lord Jagannath temple, the people of all castes and classes (Achandala Brahmana) are permitted to take food unitedly sitting on the floor.

Taking above evidences into consideration, it is proved that Lord Buddha is one of the incarnations of Shri Jagannath. As described by the saint poet Jagannath Das, Shri Jagannath is the epitome of sixteen virtues (Sola Kala) and Lord Krishna is one of the virtues of it. In the same analogy, Lord Buddha is one of the virtues of Lord Jagannath, whose importance was recognised to remove the evil practices from Hindu rites, blind belief from Hindu culture, to protect innocent animals and to advocate in favour of the act of renunciation as much superior to the activities of worldly pleasure.

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Sri Sri Nilamadhava of Kantilo

Geeta Devi

Kantilo is a big village of the ex-state of Khandapara, situated on the south bank of the river Mahanadi and on the ancient route of Jagannath Sadak, which served as an important link between Cuttack and Sambalpur both on the roadways and waterways.

The very geographical situation for the place makes it a commercial centre for traders. Apart from the trade goods like salt, spices, tobacco, cotton, oil seeds and molasses, Kantilo trades with brass and bell metal utensils which are its own native products.

Several theories have cropped up through ages to justify the place name of Kantilo. The last part of the word, 'Lo' may be a reduced form of the Sanskrit word 'Lava'. 'Lava' refers to low and deep river bed which helps in navigation. Colloqually this is spoken as 'Lo'. We can cite some other place names ending in 'Lo' like Sailo, Sarilo, Jharilo etc.

The other part of the word 'Kanti' refers to old and broken part of the bell metal. Production of bell metal commodities play a key role in the native trade of Kantilo.

Some other suppositions refer to the fact that the nearby hills and mountains of Kantilo are full of thorny bushes (Kanta) and thorny fruits (Kantei Koli). However this supposition seems not very convincing.

'Kanti' is a race name which still exists at Kantilo. They were a trading class (Vaishya Vanika) previously known as 'Sadhavas'. They were entrusted with the duty of collecting taxes from the navigators and traders passing through Kantilo on the river Mahanadi. They were also acting as official in charge of the Ghat. The race name 'Kanti' is derived from their official designation called 'Kanta Adhikari'. 'Kanta' refers to the instrument of measurement. The weighing balance used by these Kanta Adhikaris was known as 'Kanti'.

Molasses, a sugarcane product was usually exported from this 'ghat' to the hinterland. Molasses was measured by 'Banas' (an earthen container). A particular size of Bana was also called 'Kanti'. So both for the measurement of weight and volume 'Kantis' were used and the persons using these measuring rods were subsequently known as 'Kantis'.

The 'Kantis' performed these 'Ghat' duties in peace time only. During war time they acted as second liners of the war group. They were adept in the use of Topas, Kamanas and Dhanusaras. If required, they were used directly in war, else they were to supply 'Rasad' (rations) to the war camps. For all these duties they were enjoying 'jagirs' (land grants) from the rulers of Orissa. This class was not only rich but also very influential in the society.



In the northern bank of the river Mahanadi the Nandas were ruling the Airavata Mandala. Airavata Mandala comprised of the southern part of Dhenkanal, western part of Cuttack and the western end of Nayagarh. (Das p.144). From the annals of Narasinghpur Raj family it is known that they belong to this Airavata Mandala. (Mishra p.240). These Nandas were presumed to be feudatories of the Bhaumakaras. (Panigrahi p.142) That 'Kantilo' was under the Bhanjas who were feudatories of the Bhaumakaras is testified by the recent discovery of copper plate grants of the Bhanjas using the Bhaumakara era from an adjacent village called 'Dhan Changada'.

In the Talmul Plate of Dhruvananda Deva of the Nanda Dynasty (1029 A.D) we see the placename of a village called 'Kantalanda'. Kantalanda is stated as situated on the bank of the river Mahanadi. (Panigrahi p.142)

It seems plausible that by the passage of time this village 'Kantalanda' is reduced to Kantilo in the line of Sailo, Sarilo etc and an influential section of this place (Kanta Adhikaris) use this place name as their race name to focus their superiority and dominance in the society.

Sri Sri Nilamadhava Jew is the presiding deity of this place. According to historian Prof. N.K. Bose in Pal-lahara, the Savaras worship a blue rock in a Sal grove (Shorea Robusta). They call it 'Nil Madhava'. (Mishra p.5) In Kantilo also, we see the presence of 'Savaras' in a place adjacent to it called 'Kalia Palli' who demanded themselves as descendants of Savar Viswa Vasu. According to them Viswa Vasu was worshipping 'Kalia Madhava'. (Mallick p.120)

Taking into consideration the temple architecture, Pt. Binayak Mishra places it in the 9th century A.D. (Mishra p.242). Dr. Krushna Chandra Panigrahi maintains that the shrine belongs to an earlier date than the temple of the deity. (Panigrahi p.456)

We see the twin temple of Nilamadhava and Siddheswara in Gandharadi, the territory of the Bhanjas. Here also at Kantilo we see two temples close to each other, one for Sri Nilamadhava and the other for Sri Siddheswara in the temple complex of Nilamadhava.

But the iconographic features of Sri Nilamadhava of Kantilo differs from that of the deity of Gandharadi. In Gandharadi the deity holds four Ayudhas in His four hands namely Sankha (conch), Chakra (wheel), Gada (mace) and Padma (lotus). In Kantilo the deity holds only two Ayudhas namely Sankha and Chakra in His upper two hands. The lower hands rests on the heads of His two consorts, Laxmi and Saraswati.

This is no doubt a unique feature of the deity at Kantilo which testifies an earlier origin.

Another such image of Vishnu where His two hands (back) rest on the heads of Laxmi and Saraswati is found from Bihar and now preserved in the National Museum at Kolkata (Chowla - P-147). This iconic feature alongwith the roughness in the making of the body of the idol speak of its anteriority.

On 20th January 2003 some copper plate grants were unearthed from the western side of the village Dhanchangada, which includes Kalia Palli and itself being very close to Kantilo. From the reading of the plates by the epigraphist of the State Museum Miss Bharati Pal, it is known that they were issued by Satrubhanja (I), son of Silabhanja and grandson of Bidyadhara Bhanja from Vanjulabaka, the second capital city of the Bhanjas. Satrubhanja depicts himself as 'Parama Vaisnava'. The Bhauma Sambat used in this plate corroborates to 939 A.D.

Though Satrubhanja depicts himself as Parama Vaisnava he has used the invocatory verses in praise of Lord Siva as usually used by



the Bhanjas. Again, when his father and grand father are Param Maheswaras, his son some times depicted himself as Parama Maheswara and sometimes as Parama Vaisnava. However, whether they were Maheswaras or Vaisnavas, they were good patrons of both Saivism and Vaisnavism.

The other name of Satrubhanja was 'Gandhat'. Present Gandharadi is the reduced from the Gandhatpati, which according to Dr. D.C. Sircar is apparently named after Satrubhanja Gandhat where we see the twin temple of Nilmadhava and Siddheswar (Panigrahi p.105). Thus Satrubhanja who has created the town (Gandharadi) might have constructed there the twin temple. We may also surmise that the temple of Nilmadhava of Kantilo might have been constructed by the same ruler.

However there are two other contenders of the Bhanjas for the construction of the said temple at Kantilo. They are the Bhaumakaras and the Somavamsis.

The first three kings of the Bhaumakara dynasty were Buddhists and the others excepting one queen Tribhuban Mahadevi (I) were all Saivites. The temples, the credit of the construction of which is given to the Bhaumakaras are all dedicated to either Siva or Shakti. These temples are generally placed in the eighth century A.D. In the ninth century A.D., this royal house had experienced instability and decadence. (Panigrahi p.384).

Defeating the Bhaumakaras and their feudatories the Bhanjas, the Somavamsi king Yayati (I) occupied Orissa in about 931 A.D. (Panigrahi - p.86). Naturally they must have taken some more years to consolidate their position in the Odra countries.

Their initial years of occupation were not very peaceful. They were not only getting resistance from the Bhanjas, but also threat of invasion from outside, from the Kalachuries. They made their position firm only at the time of Yayati Kesari (II) who ruled from 1025 A.D. to 1040 A.D., a period too late for the construction of the temple of Sri Nilamadhava of Kantilo.

Sri R.N. Mishra who is a 'Sevak' of Sri Nilamadhava and also an employee of the local college told this author on 9th March 1999 that Khanjaa (ration) in terms of Rice, Dal and Ghee was coming from the Bhanjas for the offerings of the deity which had been ceased since last eight to ten years.

From all these evidences it may be conjectured that the Bhanjas and most probably Satrubhanja I who was a Parama Vaisnava, might have constructed the temple of Nilamadhava.

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Sambalpur Ratha Yatra

Dr. Chitrasen Pasayat

Ratha Yatra is a very popular festival not only of Sambalpur town but also in Sambalpur district. Notably, Sambalpur district has highest number of Jagannath Gudis in Orissa. Gudi refers to temple. In every revenue village of Sambalpur district one finds at least one Jagannath temple and most of them celebrate Ratha Yatra. This indicates its fame and popularity in Sambalpur. There are mainly two classes of Brahmins in Sambalpur district. They are Aranyaka or Jhadua Brahmin and Utkaliya or Udia Brahmin. It is said that, Aranyaka Brahmins approached to Sambalpur from Sonepur side and Utkaliya Brahmins migrated to Sambalpur from Puri. Traditionally, Aranyaka Brahmins are mostly Paramarthis or Vaishnavas whereas the Utkaliya Brahmins are worshippers of Lord Siva. A priest employed for worship in a Jagannath temple in the undivided Sambalpur district is invariably an Aranyaka Brahmin (Senapati and Mahanti, 1971: 111-112). Even in the Utkaliya Brahmin dominated village, the priest of the Jagannath Gudi is an Aranyaka Brahmin. Hence Ratha Yatra of Puri though is world famous; we may say that Ratha Yatra of Sambalpur areas or the erstwhile Sambalpur kingdom is a mass festival. It is well-liked and accepted festival of Sambalpur areas.

In this paper, our main emphasis is on Ratha Yatra celebrated in Sambalpur town, which is located on the bank of the river Mahanadi. It is

the district headquarters. NH-6 and NH-42 pass through Sambalpur town. In Sambalpur town, Lord Jagannath is worshipped in 26 Mathas and Mandiras, out of which 24 Pithas erect 24 Rathas for the deities during Ratha Yatra. Probably due to financial grounds, Ratha is not constructed for the deities of the Raghunath temple at Balibandha. Also, Ratha is not constructed in the Jagannath temple of Commissioner Colony for the reason that the deity is of stone. It is relevant to mention that all the three deities with Sudarsana are seated in one Ratha unlike the tradition prevalent in Puri, where each deity has a separate Ratha. It is pertinent to reveal that, deities of Commissioner Colony Jagannath temple are made up of stone, whereas wooden images of the deities as per the tradition are worshipped in the remaining 25 temples of Sambalpur town. It is significant to furnish list of 26 Mathas and Mandiras where Lord Jagannath is worshipped in Sambalpur town.

(1) Barahampura Gudi : This Jagannath temple is in Jhadua Pada, constructed by the third Chauhan king Balabhadra Dev (1594-1620) nearly four hundred years back. This temple is the oldest one in the known history of Sambalpur town and pioneer of Ratha Yatra in Sambalpur. Mausi-Maa (Gundicha) Mandir is situated in front of this temple. Raja Balabhadra Dev was a powerful king, who ruled for a long period of 25 years. However, the dates of the Chauhan rulers



mentioned in this paper are not final and more historical evidences are yet to be discovered for correct assignment of their period.

The temple has a sacred black stone at the entrance of the Garbhagriha i.e. sanctum sanctorum. For any dispute, two parties stand here one after another and vow in the name of Brahmapura Mahaprabhu that what he or she is telling is true. Even during the British Raj Court was acknowledging this and after Kiria (vow) before Brahmapura Mahaprabhu Court was even not interfering. It is pertinent to mention here that, when peace accord was signed with Surendra Sai, British Deputy Commissioner brought Surendra Sai, his son and brothers to this temple to vow that they will not continue their rebellious activities against the British. This practice is still going on though the Temple Trust Board discourages people to do so because it is widely believed that God gives hard punishment to the offender.

(2) Gopaljee Matha : There is a Jagannath temple inside Gopalji Matha. It was constructed by the Chauhan prince Bansi Gopal, who was the younger brother of Raja Baliar Singh (1660-1689), and the third son of Raja Madhukar Dev (1620-1660) and grand-son of Raja Balabhadra Dev of Sambalpur. Bansi Gopal became a Vaishnavite ascetic. Most probably, Gopaljee Matha was built during the second half of the seventeenth century. The establishment of Gopaljee Matha at Sonepur and Ramji Matha at Puri is also attributed to him (Das, 1969:242-43; Senapati and Mahanti, 1971: 62-63).

(3) Kutha Jagannath Gudi : This temple is located near Ramji temple. It was also constructed by Bansi Gopal, the prince of Sambalpur. Most likely, Kutha Jagannath temple was also built during the second half of the seventeenth century.

(4) Dadhibaman Gudi : This temple is located in Mohanti Pada. It was constructed during the

reign of Raja Baliar Singh (1660-1689) of Sambalpur. Mausii-Maa Gudi is situated near this temple. This is the biggest and most beautiful Mausii-Maa Gudi of Sambalpur town. His son Ratan Singh married Padmabati, the princess of Puri in 1678. The newly wedded wife of Ratan Singh had brought with her the image of Lord Jagannath. So, Raja Baliar Singh built this temple and installed the deity therein for regular Sevapuja. It is also believed that Prince Ratan Singh had built this temple. Whatever the case may be, one point is very clear that, this temple was constructed when Baliar Singh was the king of Sambalpur. It is relevant to mention that Baliar Singh was a great warrior and he extended the territories of his kingdom by many successful campaigns against the neighbouring states. He declared himself as the lord of eighteen Garhs (Athara Garhs). It is significant to mention that, Gajapati Maharaja of Puri was pleased with his heroic behaviour and bestowed on Baliar Singh the high title of "Hirakhanda Chhatrapati Maharaja", i.e. the great lord of the country of diamonds (Senapati and Mahanti, 1971: 62-63).

(5) Hota Pada Gudi : This Jagannath temple is located adjacent to Lady Lewis Girls High School. This is the meeting point of San Sadak and Bad Sadak in Sambalpur town. This temple was constructed by the Chauhan Raja Chhatra Sai (1689-1725), more than 300 years back. Chhatra Sai was an efficient administrator. He was the eldest son of Raja Ratan Singh and grand-son of Raja Baliar Singh of Sambalpur. One of his queens was a princess from the ruling family of Ratanpur and she had a son named Budharai. Chhatra Sai was told by some of his trusted officers that the Rani was intriguing to place his son Budharai on the throne of Sambalpur. This led to execution of both mother and the son. The Raja of Ratanpur Raj Singh wanted to take revenge of the cruel death of his sister and Bhanja i.e. nephew and he invaded Sambalpur with the



help of the Bhonsle Raja of Nagpur. Chhatra Sai was defeated and imprisoned. But subsequently he was freed (Das, 1969:270; Senapati and Mahanti, 1971: 64-65). Chhatra Sai repented a lot for his brutal and pitiless behaviour. It was a matter of great regret for him. It was difficult for him to reconcile with the situation. He was perhaps ill-advised and misguided by his so called faithful officers. He could not concentrate and focus on the administration of his kingdom. Shortly after his release, he retired to Puri in 1725 and spent the rest of his life under the feet of Lord Jagannath.

(6) Bariha Gudi : This Jagannath temple is positioned on the border of Jhadua Pada and Nanda Pada. It was constructed during the reign of Raja Ajit Singh (1725-1766). The Ista-Deva of this temple is Baraha, who is an Avatara i.e. incarnate of Lord Vishnu. Hence, the name of the temple is Bariha Gudi. Raja Ajit Singh was a worshipper of Lord Jagannath and used to spend a lot of time in Puri. He was an indolent and weak ruler. He had eight queens and three sons. The administration of his kingdom was completely under the influence of the ministers; and especially the Dewan, Dakshin Ray, who rose to power and prominence.

(7) Satyabadi Gudi : This Jagannath temple is to be found in Hat Pada. It was constructed by Narayan Singh (1833-1849), the last Chauhan Raja of Sambalpur. It was erected sometime during second quarter of the 19th century. His period was full of disturbances, because Surendra Sai was an important claimant of Sambalpur throne. Surendra Sai looked upon Narayan Singh as an usurper and claimed the throne of Sambalpur on the ground that Narayan Singh's mother was of inferior caste.

(8) Madan Mohan Gudi : This temple is situated in Dalai Pada. It was made by Rani Mukhyapan Devi, the queen of Raja Narayan Singh in 1833. Rani Mukhyapan Devi was the last Queen of

Sambalpur. In 1978, Mausai-Maa Gudi was constructed near the main temple. It is significant to point out that, when Raja Narayan Singh died on 10-09-1849, she assumed the reigns of Government. But as Narayan Singh had died without a male issue, the country i.e. Sambalpur was annexed by the British in pursuance of Lord Dalhousie's well known "Doctrine of Lapse".

(9) Lia-Khai Gudi : This temple is in Dalai Pada. The original name of this temple is Radhamohan Gudi. Previously, there was a Vaishnava Matha here established by one Dinabandhu Das. After his death, his wife Beni Pujarini built Radhamohan Gudi in this place in the year 1853. Only Lord Jagannath is worshipped here. "Lia" is a favorite and much loved Bhoga of Radhamohana of this temple. For this reason, this is popularly called Lia-Khai Gudi. So, there are two Jagannath temples in Dalai Pada.

(10) Timni Gudi : This temple is situated in Guru Pada. It was constructed by Dr. Kasinath Singh, who came to Sambalpur with the Madras Regiment during the movement led by Surendra Sai.

(11) Radha Madhab Gudi : Lord Jagannath is worshipped in the complex of Radha Madhab temple situated in Keunt Pada of Bad Bazar.

(12) Kustha Pada Jagannath Gudi : This Jagannath temple is situated in Kustha Pada of Bad Bazar. Hence, the temple is called accordingly.

(13) Mali Pada Gudi : This temple is located in Mali Pada of Bad Bazar. Jagannath with Dakshineswara Siva are worshipped. Ratha Yatra is celebrated here.

(14) Jagannathji Gopaljee Matha : This temple is situated in Khetrajpur. Separate temples for Jagannath, Radha-Krishna and Hanuman are constructed here.



(15) Gole Bazar Jagannath Gudi : This Jagannath temple is situated in front of the gate of Gole Bazar on the road between Gole Bazar Chhak and Baidyanath Chhak.

(16) Mudi Pada Jagannath Gudi : This Jagannath temple is in Mudi Pada. It was constructed by one Uddhaba Dani.

(17) Budharaja Jagannath Gudi : This Jagannath temple is in Budharaja. It was built after the construction of Hirakud Dam. Previously, the deities were worshipped in the village Parta, which was submerged under the Hirakud Dam reservoir. The compensation money that the deity received was used for the construction of this temple and the deities of Parta village have since been worshipped in this temple.

(18) Dadhibaman Gudi : This Jagannath temple is in Dhankauda.

(19) Jagannath Gudi : This temple is also in Dhankauda. Therefore, there are two Jagannath temples in Dhankauda, which was earlier a village outside Sambalpur town. These two temples are built by two different Gauntias who owned the village subsequently.

(20) Sri Ram Gopaljee Gudi : This temple is to be found in Dhanupali, which was earlier a village exterior to Sambalpur town. It was built by Shyam Dasji Mahanta of Bhatra Rani Matha. Now, it is under the Sambalpur Municipality.

(21) Raghunath Gudi : This Jagannath temple is found in Bhatra built by Maharaj Sai (1820-1827). In the past, it was a village outside Sambalpur town. Today, however, it is under the Sambalpur Municipality area.

(22) Rani Matha : This is also in Bhatra built by Rani Ratna Kumari. Her husband Raja Jayant Singh and son Maharaj Sai were kept in Banda jail of Nagpur by the Marathas. In a wish for release of her husband and son Rani Ratna

Kumari built this Matha which is known as Rani Math. Thus, Lord Jagannath is worshipped in two places in Bhatra.

(23) Bhagvat Gudi : Lord Jagannath is worshipped in this temple located in Remed.

(24) Raghunath Gudi : This temple is in Balibandha. As it has been mentioned earlier, Ratha is not constructed for the deities of this temple during Ratha Yatra.

(25) Jagannath Gudi : This temple is situated in Commissioner Colony. Only stone image of Lord Jagannath is worshipped here. As stated earlier, Ratha is not constructed in this temple.

(26) Radha Madan Gopal Gudi: Chaitanya Mission has constructed one Radha Madan Gopal Mandir at Sakhi Gopinath Pada. Radha-Krishna and Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are worshipped side by side. Ratha Yatra is being celebrated here.

In other words, Rathas are constructed only in the first 24 cases. In the remaining two cases, Rathas are not constructed due to financial problem. It is pertinent to mention that, every year new Rathas are made in Puri during Ratha Yatra. Each of the three deities has a separate Ratha. Every year Nayagarh Forest Division supplies 862 logs and Khurda Division of Forest provides 274 logs including 60 Balas to the Temple Administration for this purpose. This is the main reason that, both the Shri Jagannath Temple Administration as well as the State Government have to face a lot of difficulty and trouble in arranging logs for construction of three new Rathas every year at the time of Ratha Yatra. This is going to be a real headache for Puri Ratha Yatra in coming years. However, this is not a problem in case of Sambalpur Ratha Yatra. Old Rathas are used. It means that, after the Ratha Yatra, Ratha is dismantled and its different parts are carefully preserved in a separate safe place in each temple.



In subsequent year, different parts are assembled and only the weak logs are replaced with the new and strong logs. Certainly, one has to appreciate the technology used in construction of Ratha. As per the prevailing tradition when an Aranyaka Brahmin dies, a piece of wood of old Ratha is required at the time of burning the dead body. This is the last rite in the life of an Aranyaka Brahmin. However, the Rathas are pulled through the narrow roads of Sambalpur. For this reason, large Rathas are never made in Sambalpur.

Ratha Yatra in Sambalpur town is celebrated on Asadha Sukla Dwitiya Tithi i.e. second day of bright fortnight in the Hindu month of Asadha (June-July) and ends on Asadha Sukla Ekadasi Tithi i.e. eleventh day of bright fortnight in Asadha in two phases. First phase of Ratha Yatra is for two days i.e. on Dwitiya Tithi and Trutiya Tithi. This is popularly known as Ratha Yatra. Likewise, the second phase of the Yatra includes two days i.e. on Dasami Tithi and Ekadasi Tithi. This is commonly called Bahuda Yatra. In fact, Ratha Yatra is a ten-day festival beginning from Dwitiya Tithi to Ekadasi Tithi in the Hindu month of Asadha. Ratha Yatra in Sambalpur is organized mostly out of public contributions. Because, the landed property assigned for the performance of the daily and special nitis in different Jagannath temples have been converted into personal property by the corrupt, crooked and unscrupulous elements. This has become possible, most probably, during the British rule, either by destroying or hiding the proofs of royal grants.

During Ratha Yatra in Sambalpur, nitis are performed as per the tradition prevalent in Shri Jagannath temple at Puri. But care is taken to perform nitis only after completion of nitis in Puri. Similarly, Rathas in Sambalpur town are pulled only after the Rathas are dragged in Puri. Consequently, Rathas in Sambalpur town are

pulled usually in the afternoon which continues even at night. This is the main attraction of Ratha Yatra in Sambalpur town. As per the tradition prevalent in Puri, Rathas are not pulled after sunset. On this issue, once the State Government had to constitute one-man Commission to prove the incident in the year 2002. The then Law Secretary Shri Himadri Mohapatra headed that Commission. However, this restriction is not applicable for the Rathas in Sambalpur town.

Though 24 Rathas are constructed in different places during Sambalpur Ratha Yatra, traditionally only seven to eight Rathas are pulled to Bina-Khandi, situated on the confluence of the river Mahanadi and Harada Jor, which is a small tributary of Mahanadi. Chaurnpur village is situated on the other side of the river Mahanadi. As per the legend, the village Chaurnpur was supposed to be the seat of Raja Balaram Dev prior to his arrival at Sambalpur. Balaram Dev was the first Chauhan king of Sambalpur. He established his Sambalpur kingdom in the middle of the 16th century. There is a Kud or small island called Phas-Kuda on the meeting point of Harada Jor with Mahanadi. Jor means a stream or small river. Harada Jor is a tributary of the Mahanadi. Phas-Kuda is derived from two words namely Phasi (hanging) and Kud (island). In olden days, the jail of Sambalpur kingdom was here. Culprits were kept in the jail and were hanged to death. Subsequently, during the British Raj Britishers also used this island for that purpose till a new jail was constructed in 1892. It was a deserted land and full of jungle.

In his childhood days, the author had noticed that people did not visit even Bina-Khandi on ordinary days. Only during the Ratha Yatra, Bina-Khandi was the centre of hobnob and attraction for the people. Today, Postal Colony has come up near Bina-Khandi. Sub-Collector's Office, Tahasil Office, Sub-Registrar Office and



Civil Courts are located here. Of course, Britishers had built the residence of Deputy Commissioner on the river bank, which has been used by the Sambalpur Collector as his residence at present. When Bina-Khandi was a deserted area, then there was ample space to house seven Rathas. It was a place of great congregation. But due to all these developments, space has become a problem. So, after reaching there, each Ratha prefers to leave that place after performing some nitis early. Accordingly, other Rathas are accommodated there for the rituals.

Though, one finds a number of Rathas during Sambalpur Ratha Yatra, only seven Rathas moves to Bina-Khandi as per the prevailing tradition. These are the Rathas of Jhadua Pada (Barahampura Gudi), Mohanti Pada (Dadhibaman Gudi), Hota Pada, Hata Pada (Satyabadi Gudi), Dalai Pada (Madan-Mohan Gudi), Nanda Pada (Bariha Gudi) and Timni Gudi (Guru Pada). These Padas or residential localities are the parts of old Sambalpur town. Dalai Pada, Hat Pada, Nanda Pada and Jhadua Pada are located on Bad Sadak on the bank of the river Mahanadi. Timni Gudi and Dadhibaman Gudi are situated on San Sadak. Jagannath Gudi of Hota Pada is adjacent to Lady Lewis Girls High School at the meeting point of San Sadak and Bad Sadak in Kunjel Pada. There is a traditional song sung on this occasion.

*Barahampurur Nake Chandana,
Ta Pachhaku Dadhibamana.*

*Dadhibamana Khaele Pedu,
Ta Pachhaku Huta Pada.*

*Huta Pada Chaka Garaji,
Ta Pachhaku Satyabadi.*

*Satyabadi Hele Mauna,
Ta Pachhaku Madana-Mohana.*

*Madana-Mohana Hele Bai,
Ta Pachhaku Lia-Khai.*

*Lia-Khai Khaele Lia,
Ta Pachhaku Budha-Bariha.*

*Lia-Khai Nakare Dandi,
Se Nain Jae Bina-Khandi.*

*Budha-Bariha Khaele Murhi,
Ta Pachhaku Timni Gudi.*

*Kutha Mahapurur Ede Gandi,
Se Nain Jae Bina-Khandi.*

The above oral narrative reveals the chronological order of Rathas, which moves to Bina-Khandi one after another. As mentioned earlier, only seven Rathas go to Bina-Khandi. Pahandi starts at Brahmapura Ratha of Jhadua Pada and also moves first and the others follow accordingly. The Ratha of Kutha Jagannath does not move to Bina-Khandi. Lia-Khai Ratha also returns from half way. The oral narrative further indicates that, their positions are almost fixed. No deviation is noticed ever.

Traditionally, different Rajas, Zamindars and Gauntias had donated lands for regular seva-puja of these deities. In course of time, the priests and the unscrupulous elements have recorded these properties in their names during settlement operations. Today, however, these temples are managed by the Endowment Commission. Though the contributions are not encouraging, priests and Trust Boards are managing these temples by some means.

These Rathas return to their respective temples on Trutiya Tithi. Only the Jagannath Gudi of Jhadua Pada and Dadhibamana Gudi of Mohanti Pada have separate Mausii-Maa Gudi near the temples. The remaining temples do not have their separate Mausii-Maa temples. So, the second or the third chamber of these temples is usually prepared as Mausii-Maa temple. Locally, people call it Mausii-Maa temple for the time being, where the deities stay till Dasami Tithi. During this period, deities are decorated with



different Avataras. This is another attraction of Ratha Yatra in Sambalpur town.

The second phase of Ratha Yatra starts on Dasami Tithi. On this day, the deities leave the residence of Mausī-Maa. On this day, nitis are performed as usual only after the nitis are performed in the Gundicha temple at Puri and the Rathas are pulled. So, in the afternoon, nitis are performed and thereafter Rathas are pulled to Bina-Khandi but return only on Ekadasi Tithi. Ekadasi is an important Tithi for the Hindus. People remain on fast and during the return journey, they offer puja to the deities and thereafter they accept food.

Ratha Yatra is an important occasion when the new-born babies are taken to the Rathas. A simple puja is performed and the child touches the deities. This is an important tradition prevalent in Sambalpur town. Even, people from nearby villages come with their children to perform this niti called Ratha-Chhuan. It is a very old custom prevalent in West Orissa. After the Anna-Prasanna ritual of the child, the parents take the child to the Ratha of Lord Jagannath so that the child can touch the Ratha and the deities. By observing this ritual the body of the child gets purified. This is considered to be a very sacred niti performed for the happiness and wellbeing of the child irrespective of his or her caste and tribe. This is the occasion when the child first touches and feels the company of the deities while sitting on the Ratha. After this ritual, the child is believed to be fit for sacred functions. The priest also earns some quick bucks on this occasion.

Another important characteristic of Sambalpur Ratha Yatra is Bai-Nach. This is, in fact, the main attraction of Sambalpur Ratha Yatra. Professional lady dancers from Kolkata, Raipur

and the like are hired. In front of each Ratha, a wooden Pandal is attached, where these beautiful and charming danseuses with other accompanists or musicians sit. Ratha is pulled and stopped after every twenty or thirty meters. Then, the dancers sing and dance on the wooden platform. This continues even throughout night till the Ratha reaches its destination. Apart from the fixed amount negotiated at the time of hiring these dancers, this is also an occasion when they earn some quick bucks from the public. Besides Bai-Nach, other dancing troupes and Das-Kathia are also hired for this purpose. It is not known when this tradition of street dancing on Ratha has been introduced in Sambalpur Ratha Yatra. But this attracts people from far and wide. This is a rare tradition found in Sambalpur Ratha Yatra. This tradition of Bai-Nach is also prevalent during Sitala Sasthi Yatra in Sambalpur town. But during Sitala Sasthi Yatra, separate wooden carts are made for this purpose.

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Lord Jagannath in Buddha Purana

Gurukalyan Mahapatra

Lord Jagannath has become a mystery since time immemorial. The researchers and the litterateurs have tried to reveal the mystery and history of Lord Jagannath and His shrine, His rituals at times. But His connections with either Lord Buddha or the Buddhism though established in several ways, yet part of it remains unanswered.

Lord Jagannath along with His elder brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra are being worshipped at Puri temple which symbolises Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, a few historians reveal. Even the world famous Car Festival (Ratha Jatra) of Puri is directly taken from the Buddhism, according to the historian Pandit Surya Narayan Dash.

In her book 'Footfalls of Indian History' sister Nivedita (Margaret E. Noble) has justified that the Car Festival of Lord Jagannath has been a borrowed tradition from Buddhism. She writes, "on the contrary, the Car Festival of July hails from Buddhism and has the great metropolis, of its observance at Puri on the Orissan coast." (page- 10, History of India)



A great scholar and man of letters in India, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee in his 'First Artaballabha Mohanty Memorial Lectures' (1964) mentions, "the history of shrine of Jagannath is shrouded in mystery and the scholars everywhere are trying to unravel this mystery."

However, the connection of Lord Jagannath with Buddhism is more evident in a manuscript known as 'Buddha Purana' which could be called a voluminous epic in Oriya language. The manuscript consists of 3,000 pages (the pages could be reduced after printing). The poet of that manuscript was one Nakulananda Nayak, a minor poet of his time who

hailed from Bolangir - Patna area of Orissa State. A known writer, who was also the Professor of Utkal University in Orissa, Prof. Bansidhar Mohanty of course, took pains to edit such a big manuscript. But the work remained incomplete as Prof. Mohanty passed away suddenly.

It is also amazing that an unknown and minor poet Nakulananda Nayak could venture



for such a big manuscript in a tradition of modern poetry in Oriya language.

The poet Nayak of course, admits that he was inspired by Lord Jagannath to complete such a stupendous manuscript. Even Lord Jagannath told him to do so in his dreams. The author Nayak in this epic has justified that Lord Jagannath is the incarnation of Lord Buddha and accordingly, he has made it's caption as 'Buddha Purana.' This has been written exclusively for Lord Jagannath and the poet has proved that all His rituals have been borrowed from Buddhism. According to poet Nayak, Hinduism has similarities with Buddhism. For example, at Puri Ananda Bazar, irrespective of caste, all Hindus, including touchables and untouchables, eat together the Mahaprasad (cooked rice and curry of Lord Jagannath) from the same plate which does not pollute. There is really no caste restrictions at that time and one Brahmin can eat with a Dalit together.

Many historians and scholars such as Pandit Surya Narayan Dash, Dr. Navin Kumar Sahu, Surendra Mohanty and Paramananda Tripathy have all proved in their respective books / articles that there is no difference between Lord Buddha and Lord Jagannath. Poet Nakulananda Nayak's 'Buddha Purana' is an unique epic devoted on Lord Jagannath and proved that He is the incarnation of Lord Buddha.

The Department of Culture should bring out this wonderful manuscript, so that it could throw some new light on Lord Jagannath's connections with Lord Buddha or Buddhism.

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Jagannath Cult : An Historical Perspective

Dr. Janmejay Choudhury

The Somavamsi ruler Yayati Kesari (Yayati-I) established the first regional kingdom of Orissa¹. Puri's late 16th century temple chronicles relate construction of the first Jagannath temple and the renewal of the cult after an alleged Yavana invasion of Orissa in the 5th century A.D. He made strenuous efforts to establish Brahmanism in Orissa. He also founded the cultural individuality of Orissa. From his time onwards, Orissa has been a land of Hindus.

The epigraphical evidence in the late 12th and the 13th centuries refers to the existence of a Jagannath temple at Puri before Chodaganga Deva began the construction of the present temple in circa 1135 A.D. In his Dasgoba Copper Plate inscription, Chodaganga's grandson Rajaraja III praised his grandfather for having built the Jagannath temple which had been neglected by previous kings². K.C.Panigrahi suggested that Puri's legendary account of the alleged invasion of Orissa under the Yavana general Raktabahu in the 5th century A.D. during the reign of the legendary king Sovanadeva may well contain a historical reminiscence of the conquest of Orissa by the Rastrakuta King Govinda III during the reign of the Bhauma-Kara king Subhakaradeva who ruled in coastal Orissa around 800 A.D. And moreover, he pointed out that Jagannath's legendary absence of 146 years in western Orissa (between Raktabahu's invasion and Yayati's

'rediscovery' of Jagannath and reinstallation at Puri) corresponds more or less exactly with the space of time between the historical reigns of Subhakaradeva and Yayati-I.

The historical situation of late 16th century Orissa, particularly the circumstances leading to the downfall of the Gajapati empire in 1568 A.D. the destruction of the 'Darumurti' of Puri's Holy Trinity by Kalapahara, the alleged recovery of its most sacred portion, the Brahmopadartha, by Bisar Mahanti³, the conquest of Orissa by the Mughal general Mansingh, the rise of a local successor state under Ramachandra Deva of Khurda, his renewal of the images at Khurda in about 1587 and of the Jagannath cult at Puri in 1590/92 and finally his acknowledgement by Akbar in 1592⁴, all these events are to well known that Kalapahara⁵, one of the Afghan generals with a small unit captured Puri, plundered the legendary temple treasure of Jagannath⁶ and desecrated, and also damaged the temple with the help of an Oriya, Kalapahara discovered the hidden image of Jagannath and burnt it and afterwards cast it into the sea⁷. According to Oriya chronicle-took it on an elephant to the Ganges and had it burnt there. After its desecration, Puri "the stronghold of Jagannath (was made) into the Home of Islam".⁸ According to local tradition an Oriya named Bisar Mohanty had been able to secure the Brahma from the half-burnt image of



Jagannath which Kalapahara had thrown into the Ganga or Sea. He kept it for several years in Kujanga (a place in the Mahanadi delta) till Ramachandra Deva in a dream was ordered by Lord Jagannath Himself to get the Brahma from Kujanga, to set up new images of Holy Trinity and to insert the Brahma into the new image of the Lord. This legend established Ramachandra's claim to act like the former imperial Gajapati under the direct order of Jagannath. The legend also proved the unbroken continuity of the cult which he had reestablished as "second Indradyumna". It explained to Jagannath's devotees that even Kalapahara had actually not been able to destroy more of Jagannath's image than during the Navakalebara rituals is replaced regularly every ten to twelve years. The image which was restored by the "second Indradyumna" was therefore essentially the same as the one which Vishnu Himself had once set up for the mythical "First Indradyumna" in the hoary past. Due to his historical and legendary achievements Ramachandra Deva and his successors were acknowledged throughout Orissa as the new Gajapatis.⁹ This thing mentioned in Achuta Sagar Inscription and Achuta Ganga Inscription (The Sriang Inscription of Achyuta Baliarsingh)¹⁰.

It is interesting that no Afghan invader attacked Puri in 1568 A.D. Before this period many Oriya literature like Oriya Mahabharat of Sarala Das, Oriya Bhagabat of Jagannath Das, Oriya (Dandi) Ramayan of Balaram Das, Harivamsa and Sunyasamhita of Achutananda Das, Premabhakti Brahma Gita and Gobinda Chandra Gita of Yasobant Das, Sunya Namadeva and Hetu Udaya Bhagabat of Anant Das etc had been written, but nowhere mentioned regarding the name of Kalapahara and the Afghan invasion of Puri. Many Oriya Vaishnav literature also written after 1568 A.D. are silent on the painful episode of the desecration of Jagannath temple. During the period of Sri Chaitanya, many Bengali

Vaishnav literature had been written regarding Lord Jagannath and Jagannath temple which also never mentioned the name of Kalapahara¹¹. So it is now the question how king Ramachandra Deva achieved the title Gajapati and also became 'second Indradyumna'? The legend of Yayati Kesari is to be regarded primarily as a construct of late 16th century Orissa for validation and legitimization of priestly and royal authority after the downfall of the imperial Gajapatis. On the one hand the legendary history of Yayati became closely adjusted to the history of Ramachandra and, on the other hand, specified characteristics of the cult hero Yayati were transmitted to Ramachandra¹². In 1978, H.Von Stietencron pointed out that the author of the Madala Panji may have "transposed (events of the late 16th century) into the remote past to link and equate Yayati's fame as founder of Somavamsi dynasty with that of Ramachandra, the founder of the Khurda dynasty¹³.

(i) The historical interruption of Puri's cult by Kalapahara depicts strange similarities with the account of the legendary "Mughal" invasion by Raktabahu in the 5th century A.D. According to the Madala Panji it was followed by another "Mughal" occupation of Orissa. It lasted 35 years till the rise of Yayati Kesari and thus corresponds nearly exactly with the duration of the historical Afghan-Mughal occupation of Orissa between 1568 and 1592: when Ramachandra Deva was acknowledged by Akbar as local successor of the erstwhile imperial Gajapatis. Like Ramachandra, Yayati Kesari thus brought to an end the time of Arajaka as both "Kingless" periods of foreign rule are called in the chronicle.

(ii) The historical renewal of the Jagannath cult by Ramachandra Deva finds its equivalence in Yayati Kesari's legendary achievements. According to Puri's chronicle, in both cases it took place after the recovery of Jagannath. Whereas Ramachandra recovered Jagannath's most



sacred portion from Kujang where Bisar Mohanty had hidden it after its recovery from the Ganges, Yayati Kesari rediscovered and renewed Jagannath's dilapidated Murti near Sonepur.

(iii) Particularly revealing is the correspondence between the historical and legendary stories of a stepwise renewal of the cult. It took place only several years after both rulers had come to throne, viz., in Ramachandra's 7th and Yayati's 9th regnal years. Moreover in both cases the images were renewed outside Puri. Under Ramachandra Deva this happened in his capital Khurda whereas Yayati Kesari performed the great 'Vanayaga' ritual in the vicinity of his former capital near Sonepur. And most surprisingly, in both cases Jagannath was finally reinstalled on His Simhasana at Puri only two years after the renewal of His murti.

(iv) According to Madala Panji, Ramachandra Deva was recognized by Akbar as successor to the imperial Gajapatis in his 11th regnal year. Yayati Kesari, too installed the images at Puri in his 11th regnal year and thus became the legendary founder of Orissan kingship.

(v) For their great achievements both Ramachandra Deva and Yayati Kesari were hailed as 'Dwitiya or Abhinava' Indradyumna after the mythical founder of the Jagannath Cult at Puri.¹⁴

These similarities between legendary accounts and historical events testify to an attempt to validate Ramachandra's still very precarious position by depicting him according to an allegedly already existing model of the cult hero Yayati Kesari. However no such model for Ramachandra Deva seems to have existed. In Puri, too, no pre-sixteenth century sources of the Yayati Kesari legend are known to us. Contemporary facts are fully silent about any activities of the Somavamsis at Puri, particularly of Yayati Kesari as builder of the first Jagannath temple at Puri. The silence of early medieval sources would be surprising in view

of the many available Somavamsi inscriptions and other literary sources which could have mentioned or even praised Yayati Kesari and his great deeds at Puri. In Purusottama Mahatmya which has contained the Indradyumna legend and the origin of Jagannath's Daru Devata at Puri there is no mention of Yayati Kesari¹⁵. Although historians have become reluctant in using an argumentum ex silentio, we are certainly entitled to ask why the author of the Mahatmya should not have at least alluded to mention Yayati Kesari, the "Second Indradyumna", if his great achievements for the Jagannath cult were known to him. There is no name of Yayati Kesari among the 44 Kesari kings and royal patrons of Jagannath temple. The list of Jagannath's landed property contains detailed accounts of the endowments by each king from "Chodagangadeva" onwards upto Mukundadeva, the last imperial ruler before 1568¹⁶. It is great important that no donation of Yayati Kesari is mentioned in this list. Kesari kings are briefly mentioned as the builders of the Lingaraja temple at Bhubaneswar.

As long as no new evidence is at our disposal we have therefore to conclude that the Yayati Kesari tradition was not existing in Puri before the re-establishment of the Jagannath cult by Ramachandra Deva of Khurda in the nineties of the 16th century. Two things, however, seem to be clear. The legend was fully developed when the chronicle got its final shape in the 17th century and, as has been shown, it exhibits a striking correspondence with the overall political situation in Orissa in the late 16th century and in particular with Ramachandra Deva's renewal of the Jagannath cult. Not Ramachandra Dev of Khurda was depicted in the light of the cult hero Yayati Kesari but the hero was constructed to validate Ramachandra's claim to the Gajapati throne. The Madala Panji and a few contemporary sources provide evidence of Ramachandra's precarious situation after his successful renewal of the



Jagannath cult at Puri. Although he was acknowledged and hailed by the priests of temple as "Second Indradyumna."¹⁷

In its own way it clearly "proves" that already in the hoary past a temporary interruption of the cult has been successfully overcome by Yayati Kesari, in a similar way as was done by Ramchandra Deva of Khurda in the present time. What Raktabahu had tried in vain, Kalapahara was also unable to accomplish. Buried and recovered in the hoary past near Sonepur and again recovered in the present age in the form of His most sacred Brahma portion, Jagannath survived both attempts to destroy His murti. The most important message of the Bisar Mahanty and Yayati Kesari legends to Jagannath's devotees is proclaimed already in the very beginning of the temple chronicle which commences with the words "Visnu the Lord of deities never abandons Sri Purushottama (Puri) even though crores of Brahma are destroyed."

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5. According to the tradition of Bengal, Kalapahara was in his early life a Brahman named Kalachanda Ray. In later period he fell in love with Dulai, a Sultan Lady, by which he became out of Hindu restriction. Then his target was to destroy the Jagannath temple, the chief centre of Hindu religion.
Kalapahara, Farmoli Sister's son to Bahlol Lodi, was the Jahangir of the Sarkar of Oudh (E and D): Tarikh-i-sher Shohi. Vol. IV- p. 352). According to (wagiat-i-Mushtugi. P.548) he was called Mian Mahammad Kalapahara.

Barbak Shah after his defeat by Sikander had abandoned Jaunpur and retreated to Mahammad Khan Farmoli who bore the title Kalapahara or Black Mountain.

E.D. Tarikh-i-Khan Jahan Lodi (Vol. V.P.93) Vide - Briggs Ferista. Vol. I, P.560

6. According to N'mat Allah's Makhzan-i-Afghan of the year 1612 A.D, "every Afghan, who took part in campaign, obtained as booty one or two gold images, Kalapahara destroyed the temple of Jagannath at Puri which contained 700 idols made of gold, the biggest of which weighed 30 Mans" (M.A.Rahim, History of Afghan in India, A.D.1545-1631). The Temple Chronicle of Puri speaks of a booty worth of 52 crores (520 millions) rupees.
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Lord Jagannath - An Epitome of Oriyan Identity

Mahimohan Tripathy

The concept of a deity for a state is an inherent concept that existed perhaps in the third millennium B.C. In an old civilization like Egypt, each region, district and settlement had its own Gods or Deities and its own myths which were accepted with absolute tolerance by the official clergy. The Gods personified the forces of nature, supervising every event and every activity; they were responsible for the destiny of the country and every inhabitant it. The cults of the various Gods were the responsibility of the *pharaoh* and the priests who provided for the terrestrial needs of each deity and the care of their material images according to extremely complex rituals.¹

In the Orissan context, it is found that the great temple of Lord Jagannath ever since its inception has become an institution of unique national importance, which flourished under royal patronage of the Orissan kings. It is evident from the history of Orissa that it was under King



Anangabhimadeva-III (1211-1238 A.D.), Lord Purusottama became the State Deity of Ganga empire. Purusottama was an early name of Jagannath. In Draksharama inscription of his sixth regnal year (1216 A.D.), King Anangabhimadeva

called himself 'Routa' (Deputy) and 'Putra' (Son) of the three deities- Purusottama, Rudra and Durga and considered his empire as the empire of Purusottama (Purusottama Samrajya). In Bhubaneswar inscription of

Anangabhimadeva, he was called the son and the deputy of Purusottama. The date of this inscription has been identified to be the 9th of January 1230 A.D.

As mentioned in 'Madalapanji' the old chronicle of the Sri Jagannath Temple written on palm leaves, Anangabhimadeva-III, staying in His capital at Cuttack, dedicated everything to Sri Purusottama Sri Jagannath and remained as His deputy. Accepting Lord Jagannath as the king of



Orissa, Anangabhimha renounced his royal 'abhiseka' (Coronation).²

It is further mentioned in 'Madalapanji' that the king 1st Yayatikesarī of the Somavamsi dynasty, who established himself as the new king of Orissa, asked the learned Sanyasins and Brahmins about the whereabouts of 'the Lord of the Kings of Orissa'. It was in his 11th regnal year, He knew from them that the image of Lord Jagannath had been taken to a secret place near Sonepur in Western Orissa and buried there consequent upon invasion of a foreign king Raktabahu. King Yayati recovered the image from the soil. Since the image was decayed, the king decided to have a new image prepared and installed in a newly built temple at Puri, "The only available tradition about the founder of the pre-Chodaganga temple of Purusottama is the legendary account in the temple chronicle of Puri. But it is a question still historically unsolved as to which Yayati, Yayati-I or Yayati-II, constructed a temple for Lord Jagannath at Puri prior to the present temple which is believed to have been constructed by the king Chodagangadeva of the Ganga dynasty in the 12th century. Another question arises as to whether there was any temple of Lord Purusottam at Puri prior to Yayati. No historical account is available. As depicted in some puranic or mythological literature, a king Indradyumna of Malaba had constructed a huge temple for Lord Jagannath in Srikshetra i.e. Puri, In course of time, this temple collapsed. But there is no historical evidence as to such construction. Indradyumna appears to be a legendary figure.

Dr. S.N. Rajguru, an eminent epigraphist and historian of Orissa has written that during the time of the king Yayati-II of Soma dynasty in Orissa, attempts were made to bring together all the main deities, worshipped in different places of the then Orissa-Goddess Stambheswari or

Ekansha-Subhadra of western Orissa, Valadev or Nagaraj of Toshali (northern Orissa) and Purusottama-Jagannath of Kalinga and Kangoda were worshipped at Puri as the State-deities of the combined Tri-Kalinga empire.⁴

German Researcher H.Kulke observes, "It is certain that under none of the Somavamsis the God Purusottama of Puri played the role of family deity (kuladevata) or even of a state-deity (rastra-devata). All of them were strong minded Saivas who left the testimonies of their devotion in their ambitious building activities in the Saiva-kshetras, especially in Bhubaneswar, Purusottam became only a subsidiary state deity of the Somavamsa kingdom."⁵

It appears that right from king Chodaganga all the kings of the Ganga dynasty, prior to Anangabhimha deva-III, were worshipping Jagannath as the state-deity, though no royal declaration was there to that effect. The declaration was probably due to a tradition associated with the main deity of Puri and was taken advantage of by Anangabhimha for political reasons.⁶ It was after conquest of Orissa by Chodagangadeva and establishment of the Ganga dynasty in Orissa, Purusottama or Jagannath worship was elevated to an empire or state level under royal patronage. The family deity of the Gangavamsa was Gokarneswar, But Chodagangadeva assumed the title of Parama Maheswar, Parama Vaishnava and Parama Brahmanya. Prof. Kailas Chandra Dash opines that for the first time the name Jagannath was inscribed in Kurneswar inscriptions in the Year 1230 A.D.⁷ Some other scholars say that for the first time the God of Puri was called Jagannath in the Srikurman (1309A.D.) and Simanchalam (1319A.D.) inscriptions of Bharnudeva-II during his reign from 1306 to 1328 A.D.⁸



Narasimhadeva-I succeeded his father Anangabhimadeva-III in 1238 A.D. and reigned till 1264 A.D. He followed the 'deputy ideology' of his esteemed father. In his Kapilas inscription he declared that he humbled the pride of his enemies at the command of Lord Purusottama. He regarded himself as the deputy, the son and the military-general of Lord Purusottama. He was quite successful in his campaigns against the muslims to check that aggressive power in India.⁹ Another significant achievement of this king was the construction of the Surya temple at Konark. It was then the highest temple in India. His motive behind such construction was perhaps to exceed the status of his father and to raise his imperial legitimation on an all India level. Though Lord Purusottama was the state-deity, Narasimha had a special devotion for Surya, the sun-god. Some scholars, therefore, presume that Surya was Narasimha's personal deity (Istadevta). He was the first king of Orissa, who bore the title of Gajapati (Lord of the elephants). A title which became a great royal title in Orissa under the late Gangas and Suryavamsis.

After the fall of Ganga dynasty another glorious dynasty designated as Surya or Suryavamsa dynasty ruled Orissa. The founder of this dynasty was Kapilendradeva (1435-1468 A.D.). Kapilendra after occupying throne made an official proclamation in Oriya language declaring Lord Jagannath as the state-deity. During his time, the change of name from Purusottama to Jagannath had a deep popular appeal. Also during his rule, Oriya was recognized in place of Sanskrit as the official language. In his Warangal and Srisailam inscriptions, Kapilendra assumed the title of a son and servitor of Jagannath.

A remarkable achievement in the reign of Kapilendra was the composition of Mahabharata

in Oriya by poet Sarala Das. In this epic a legendary history of Jagannath has been depicted for the first time in Oriya literature.

King Kapilendra unlike his predecessors, perhaps, assumed a priestly function as a first servant (adya sevak) of Lord Jagannath. Even today, such a service designated as 'Gajapati Maharaja Seva' is being performed by the Raja of Puri in accordance with the Temple Record of Rights.

A comparative study would reveal that in certain dynasties in India and abroad, there were state deities or family deities. For instance, in the Vijayanagar kingdom in South India, the kings who were staunch Saiva dedicated their empire to the deity, Siva-Virupaksa and ruled as His deputy. In the Kadamba dynasty of Goa, Nrusimha was the 'Ista-devata'. It is found from the Ramayana of Sage Valmiki, that the family deity of Ramachandra was Jagannath. Lord Rama had advised Bibhisana to worship Jagannath, the family deity of *Ikshvaku* dynasty.

"Aradhaya Jagannatham, Ikshvaku Kula Daivatam" (Uttarakanda)

Ramachandra belonged to Ikshvaku dynasty and as a Suryavamsi, his family deity must have been Surya, the sun-god. He has used the word, 'Jagannath' as an adjective of Surya, which means Lord of the Universe. As indicated at the outset, a study of the Egyptian king lists and Legends reveals that menes (or Hor-Aha) was considered to be the first king of the first dynasty of Egypt (2920-2770 or 2955-2780 B.C). Menes was the founder of Memphis, the capital of the newly united country. The chief deity of Memphis was Ptah who was the patron-deity of craftsmen and artists. Who was thought to have created the universe and its inhabitants. Menes erected the first temple to the God Ptah, the patron deity of the town



throughout the long history. Ptah became later on a composite deity, *Ptah-Sokar* and *Ptah-Sokar Osiris*.

In the 5th Egyptian dynasty (2450-2290 B.C.) the cult of Sun-God Ra became wide spread and sun temples were built in many places. Later on the Theban God Amun was united with the Heliopolitan God Ra, to become Amun-Ra, who became the main god of the state. Great temples were built for Amun-Ra at Karnak and Luxor, King Amunhotep - IV (1350 - 1333 B.C.) reformed religious beliefs. When the sun-disk Aton became the one supreme God, a creed akin to monotheism.¹⁰

The Egyptian King (Pharaoh) was not only the king but also a priest or sevak of the chief deity of the state. The Director of the Egyptian Museum of Cairo says; "

The main function of the king was to preserve 'maat', the proper order of things. In order to fulfill this function, the king was also the priest who presented the prescribed offerings to the god, one of whom was the chief god at a particular period of history or in a particular place (for example the state god Amun-Ra of the new kingdom or the falcon god Horus of the Edfu). The king was also represented as a mighty bull or regal lion...¹¹

Similarly, in ancient Mexico the rulers of the great city of Teotihuacan who flourished from the first century B.C. until about 650 A.D., were more primitive type of divine-kings or priest kings.¹²

Researcher A.P. Patnaik points out that his type of political thought had its origin in the Sumerian city-states, where the chief god was considered to be the supreme authority, while the ruler served as a bailiff of the gods to promote the weal of the city. Like the Sumerian god who

lived like a king in his ziggurat palace and was worshipped along with his family members and attended by hundreds of servants, the deity Jagannath of Puri remains in a huge temple with other companion deities and has thousands of priests and attendants.¹³

Contemporary with Egyptian civilization and possibly of even earlier origin was that which sprang up in western Asia in the river valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, the region which was called Mesopotamia. The earliest people to found cities in Mesopotamia were the Sumerians. The chief city of the Sumerians was Nippur (on the Euphrates, south of Babylon) and their chief god was 'Enlil', the god of Air.¹⁴ It is interesting to note that the word 'Enlil' has a resemblance with the Sanskrit word 'Anil'; which means Air, under king Hammurabi (about 2100 B.C.). Babylon became the capital of a new empire and Marduk took the place of 'Enlil' as the chief of the gods.

The Srilankan king Agrabodhi-II (592-602 AD) had declared Buddha as the highest sovereign of the state by dedicating his kingdom to the Tooth-relic. King Jayavarman-IV of Angkor (928 - 941 AD) had built a five stepped pyramid, on the summit of which a Linga of Tribhubaneswar was placed. In an inscription this royal Siva-Linga was named as 'Kamaratengjagat ta rajya' which means 'the God who is the royalty'. It could be said that the 'God king' and the 'King-priest' concept was there in some states of foreign civilizations.

After the fall of Surya dynasty, Jagannath was no more conceived officially as the state deity; but had remained and still remains as a main deity of the state of Orissa. It is "an institution of unique national importance in which millions of Hindu devotees from regions far and wide have reposed their faith and belief and have regarded it as the epitome of their tradition and culture; and whereas



long prior to and after the British conquest the superintendence, control and management of the affairs of the Temple have been the direct concern of the successive Rulers, Governments and their officers and of the public exchequer'.¹⁵ Sri Jagannath temple of Puri is being managed by the state government through a Managing Committee. The Raja of Puri is the hereditary chairman of the committee.

A comparative study of the prevalent religious practice and tradition of the Puri temple with that of some erstwhile states of ancient civilizations, would reveal a striking similarity and lead us to presume that Jagannath is every ancient deity in the world.

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Evolution of Religious Rituals in Shree Mandir

Prafulla Chandra Sahoo

Resume of the Shree Mandir

The sacrosanct temple, where in Lord of the Universe Sri Jagannath with his elder brother Sri Balabhadra and sister Sri Subhadra is worshipped from time immemorial is reverentially called Sri Mandir. Not only in Orissa or in India, this temple is widely acclaimed throughout the world for its own grandeur and mystic acceptability. No doubt the temple is aesthetically graceful for its artistic and sculptural beauty but the nomenclature is not justified without recounting the reminiscences of its deep past. According to the scriptures it was known as Srikshetra, Sri Tirtha, Sri Dham and subsequently widely accepted as Sri Mandir, the deluxe divine abode of Sri, the Goddess of wealth, luxury and lustre, who is the energy consort of Lord Jagannath and hence the name Sri Mandir. That ancient temple is not the present day's edifice of Lord Jagannath, which subsequently is transformed and developed in course of time. Shree Devi is at present worshipped in a beautiful north-western separate temple, called Mahalakshmi Temple.

Deities of Sanctum Sanctorum

On the jewelled throne of the sanctum sanctorum four wooden idols of Sri Jagannath,



Sri Balabhadra, Sri Subhadra and Sri Sudarshan are present. Another miniature wooden replica of Sri Jagannath, called Madhav also is present. Besides these, there are two metal female images of Shree Devi and Bhu Devi on both the sides of Lord Jagannath. A total of seven deities are worshipped on the throne. Devotees from a distance can call a clear visual image of only Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath and Shree Sudarshan from the south to the north of the sitting throne. In between Lord Balabhadra and Lord Jagannath in the middle is seated Devi Subhadra. A devotee bowing and touching his head on Garuda pillar can only see Devi Subhadra from the mid-portion of the Garuda Stambha. Preceptors and Gurus like Ramanuj have had eulogical prayers to Devi Subhadra as Shree or Lakshmi, the consort of Lord Jagannath and hence the name of the temple, "Shree Mandir."

The above said four wooden deities are worshipped by some philosophers jointly as Param Brahma or the Absolute Supreme Being. According to them Sri Jagannath is symbolic of Supreme, Devi Subhadra represents Maya, the illusion and Sri Balabhadra as Jiva or Mortal soul. When Brahma or the Supreme Soul is enlivened



by Maya, the illusory energy, the universe is created. Therefore from the consummation of Sri Jagannath, the Param and Devi Subhadra, the Maya, the Jiva, Sri Balabhadra is thriving in the whole of creation. The joint worship, therefore, of the deities is worship of the Supreme. They represent the core of the primordial sound, i.e. the Pranab Mantra, Om.

According to the Sakta Cult, the all pervading one and only energy in Shree Devi or Adya Mahalakshmi, who, when wills to create universes, divides Herself to three cosmic powers, i.e. Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati, who symbolise Sri Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Sri Balabhadra respectively. Those three cosmic powers produced three pairs of opposite sexes; i.e. Mahakali produced the pair of Shiva and Saraswati, Mahalakshmi produced Brahma and Lakshmi and Mahasaraswati gave birth to Vishnu and Gouri. As directed by the original Mahalakshmi unions of Brahma and Saraswati created the universe; Vishnu and Lakshmi sustained the universe and Shiva and Gouri destroyed it. So worshiped on the jewelled throne, Sri Jagannath represents Vishnu, Balabhadra denotes Shiva and Subhadra symbolises Brahma. Similarly, Shaivaites worship the deities as Shiva and Buddhists as Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. It is clear that who so ever prays and worships in whatever form or faith, the boon is accordingly awarded; so elastic is the Jagannath cult and faith.

Worshipping Rituals

The offering of prepared edibles or Amunihan to the divine deities is called Naibedyā, when the entire process itself is Puja. The Naibedyā after being offered to the God becomes Prasad. This Prasad or part of it is reverentially partaken by the priests, devotees or by others in other common temples, where as it is honoured as Mahaprasad (after the prasad is re-offered to Devi Vimala with leaves of the marmelos tree) in Shree Mandir and is partaken together by all from scavengers to Brahmins without any hesitation.

As one is to observe certain procedures like washing hands and taking seat etc. before taking food, series of procedures are observed methodically before Amuniah is offered to the divine deities which are called Puja Paddhati.

Offerings to the God are called "Upachar" and five 'upacharas' like Gandha (sandle paste), Puspā (flower), Dhoop (aromatic air), Deep (earthen or metallic lamp), and Neivedya (edibles) are offered to the divine deities in Gopala Ballabh (break fast), Bhogamandap (special bhog) and Bada Singhar (supper).

Sakala Dhoop (morning - offering of food), Madhyahna Dhoop (lunch) and Sandhya Dhoop (dinner) consist of sixteen upacharas. They are - Asana, Swagat, Padya, Arghya, Achamana, Madhuparka, Punarbara Achamana, Snana, Gandha, Bastra, Alankar, Puspā, Dhoop, Deep, Naivedya and Aratrika. Since sixteen types of offerings are tended, this is called Sodash Upachar Puja. For every Upachara separate material and offerings are defined. For example - let us take 6th Upachara, i.e. Madhupark. When in a brass pot, honey, ghee and curd are kept together and the pot is covered with another brass-pot, it is defined as Madhuparka. But without Sanskar or Purification, no Upachara is offered to God.

By Bikshana, Prokshana, Tadana, Abagunthana, Dhenumudra, Mahamudra and eight times counting of the original mantra, the Upacharas are purified. Besides that Dismudra or ten types of intertwining of fingers and hands like Abahana, Sthapana, Sannidhana, Sannirodha, Sakalakarana, Abagunthana, Dhenumudra, Amrutakarana, Mahamudra, Paramikarana, are required in the Puja. The mechanism of Mudras are extensively described in scriptures but to avoid elongation, all the mudras are not detailed here. But Dhenu Mudra is required in both and hence its mechanism is exhibited here. Right hand's index finger and ring finger, when both are joined with left hand's middle and little finger and right hand's middle finger and little finger are united with left



hand's index and ring fingers, it becomes Dhenumudra.

Three Dhoopas of Sakala Dhoop, Madhyahna Dhoop, Sandhya Dhoop besides Bhogamandap Bhoga and Bada Singhar Bhoga of the divine deities consist of cooked rice, curries, payas and varieties of cakes. Rice and curries are not offered in Gopalaballabha Bhoga. The additional Bhoga or Bhoga Mandapa Bhoga is not offered in the sanctum sanctorum, but is offered in Bhogamandap house. Leaving aside that fruits and dried foods like Kora and Khai (sweetmeat balls and parched paddy-flower) are offered in the Nata Mandir or Dancing Hall. The Pujak or the priest offers these after purifying the Naibedyas, which is called Sarpamanohi.

Those who offer all the Upacharas and Naibedyas are called Pujakas or Archakas. Since these Puja-procedures belong to divine oblation, there is no denying if they are called Acharyas, who. It is said in the scriptures that one should be divine to worship a divine-deity. So Pujakas are always purified ones. A purified person is reflected in the deity. A purified Pujaka after getting up from sleep, proceeds to the temple after attending to his purification by ablution, vandan, Tarpan and Vaishwadeva etc. with clean cloths. Similarly, divine deities, after getting up from sleep are to pass through Dwaraphita (opening of the temple-door), Mangala Alati (propitious waving of light before the divine image), Mailam (unwrapping the ornaments) and Vesh Ullagi (undressing the garments). The Abakash or the morning ablution and brushing, bathing etc are symbolically observed by the divine images, after which they are dressed up with cleaned cloths and offered Gandha, Puspa, flower garlands and ornaments. After this purification, Vaishnab Agnee, Surya Puja (sun-worship) and Dwarapala Puja (worshipping the gate-keeper) are attended to. Then only Pujak performs Gopal Ballabha Puja in which Sankhudi or cooked food is not offered.

The Pujaka, whether in Panchupachara or Sodash upachara puja purifies the place, sitting mat, his body, soul and mind when he attends to the puja, serially from purification of sitting mat, to the Matrukanyash. In them purifying Mantra, Rishi, and Chhandadevata i.e. godly rhyme are respectively borne in the head face and heart. It is called Rushyadi Nyasa.

Every divine image has its own fundamental mantra; which is divided to vedic and tantric puja of the God. This fundamental mantra is cast on the body of the divine image. A Pujak is to implant life in to the body of the image as if he was doing so for his own body.

After external Matraka, Sri Balabhadra's Sri Kanthadi Nyasa, Devi Subhadras' Kala Nyasa and Sri Jagannatha's Keshavadi Nyasa are separately executed. Tatwa Nyasa, Pitha Nyasa, Mantra Nyasa, Srusti, Sthiti and Sanhar Nyasa, Murtipanjari Nyasa etc. are executed respectively by the Pujak. In these Nyasas, time permitting, fifty alphabets are entrusted to the fingers, various parts of the body and on the whole of the body. So they are called Kara Nyasa (Hand Nyasa), Anga Nyasa (part of the body Nyasa) and Sarbanga Nyasa (whole body Nyasa). The above said Nyasas include Rushyadi Nyasa and Dhyana (meditation).

The divine deities on the jewelled throne are not metal or stone images. They are wooden idols and hence are liable to be disfigured if are bathed or washed. Therefore, reflection of the images in mirrors made of an amalgamation of eight metals are bathed and washed during Puja.

After every Dhoop and before the other Dhoop, the ornaments and cloths are changed, which is called Mailam. The images are thereafter, decorated with new clothings and ornaments, which is called Besh Lagi or Beshabadhya. Besides Upacharas, Alatis after every Dhoop, Mangala Alati during every morning hours and Aratrik Alati in the evening and before the images



retire for sleep are offered. They are called Sandhya Alati and Pahuda Alati respectively. These traditional usages are defined as Nityarchana laws.

Sources of Puja Paddhaties

Nigam, Agam and Lokachera or folk customs are sources of these puja Paddhaties or procedures. Veda and Tantra are known as Nigam and Agam respectively; both of whom accept folk customs as per the culture of the soil, time and person.

Dharma (Religions customs binding the society) Artha (money for the sustenance of life), Kama (biological need for procreation) and Moksha (Salvation from the cycle of birth and death.) are called Chaturbarga or four essentials of life. Puja Anusthan or worshipping organisation is a Dharmanusthan or religious organisation. There is no scarcity of wealth for the maintainance of life for a religious organiser. One resorting to true way of life is called "Dharmik". So say the scriptures that Dharma is born of righteous customs. Wealth be got through simple way of life is honestly earned. So truthful aspiration easily bears fruit without claiming to be religious and not boasting of his possessions and not striving to fulfill his desires, one who does his duty unattached gets his Nirvan or escapes from the clutches of rebirth.

The Veda has not expounded exactly like this. But to derive the result, one is to worship the god through Yagna i.e. sacrificial fire. The divisions and procedures of sacrificial altar and fire are available from the Vedas practical methods.

When this much only is available from Nigam or Vedic writings, different styles of worship of different gods are detailed in Agam or Tantras. Various sages, saints and Acharyas have created mainly 64 Tantric scriptures, like Pancha Ratna and Yamal etc. in their own styles; including number of sub-Tantras. The Tantrik scriptures are called Aagama, which is a mixture of three

Alphabets of Aa + Gat + Ma, 'Aa' is the first alphabet of the word 'Agata' (has come) which has come from Shiva's mouth; 'ga' is the first alphabet of the word 'Gata' (gone into) which has gone in to the Uma's mouth and 'Ma' is the first alphabet of the word 'Mata' (theory) which denotes to the theory of Basudeva Krishna. Therefore, this Aagama or Tantra Sastra is divided to three types - Shaiva Tantra, Sakta tantra and Vaishnaba Tantra. There is more than one Acharas in Tantric law, out of which Bamachara (leftic way and Kaulachara (traditional family way) are vital ones. As this Bamachara is anti-Vedic, it is disdained or shunned by the Vaishnaba Tantra. Let us take Bamachara's Pancha 'Ma' kar Puja for example -

In Bamachara way of worship, Pancha 'Ma' kara (five Ma) of Madya (wine), Mansa (meat), Matsya (fish), Mudra (interwining of fingers) and Maithuna (sexual co-habitation) have been accepted as five direct ingredients of offerings to the god; whereas alternatively Vaishnachar symbolically offers green coconut water in a brass vessel, Jaiphala (Muristica Fragrance) paste-water in reddish earthen pot, fried ginger and green-gram cake etc. as Naibedyas.

Yantra, Tantra and Mantra are important components of Tantrik scriptures. A divine practiser is Sri Sadhak, and the holy place of practice is Sri Sadhana Pitha and the divine image inside the Sri Sadhanapitha is called Siddha Yantra or enlivened Machine. Therefore, Sriksheetra (Puri) Sri Mandir (Jagannath temple) and the sanctum sanctorum of the temple are as a whole, known to be a Siddhapitha. In the sanctum sanctorum, divine deities are worshipped in lieu of yantra. As a well versed and trained Yantrik or Engineer is able to operate the yantra or machine; a true disciple of a true preceptor, similarly can worship the divine images. His style of worship as guided by Guru is called Tantra.



The Yantra as aforesaid is man-made and artificial. The deities are Siddha Yantra, enlivened by rigorous Sadhana or spiritual practice of many a Yagi, sage and saints. When an artificial machine is operated by human or electrical energy; Siddha Yantra is operated by divine power. The worshipped image is capable of immense inherent power. The Sadhak or worshipper by his own spiritual practice, acquires that divine power and does not face any problem in operating the Siddha Yantra. This spiritual practice as a whole is Tantra.

A strong and secured house is constructed for the establishment of Yantra. For the habitation of the divine deities in Srikshetra's Nilachala Holy Pitha, Sri Mandir has been built. It is clear that divine image, Sri Kshetra and the holy pitha are in place of yantra and the pujak is in place of tantra; but the mantra (recitation of holy words invoking the God) is Guru's gift; which is Pujakas main instrumental assistant. So Guru is elevated to the divine glory of Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Maheswar. It is therefore explicit that Guru is in Mantra, Pujak or Sadhak is Tantra and the divine image is in yantra.

Pujak, the Worshipper

Pujaka is not ordinary human; as aforesaid. The Puja-laws may be different as per Shaiva, Shakta and Vaishnava Variation; but the Pujaka is all in one - Shaiva, Shakta and Vaishnava. He is brahmin, good charactered, honest, popular and divine like God. He primarily worships Vedic Mother - Gayatree. So he is Shakta. In course of time he attains the wisdom of realisation that he himself is Shiva, and hence he is Shaiva. For example - Ten gods are worshipped in Veda and eleven Rudras belong to them. Gyanendriyas (wisdom-senses) are five and Karmendriyas (working senses) are five who are titled as Rudras. Besides them Prana (life-force) is the eleventh Rudra. Both Shiva and Rudra are inseparable and with this realisation it makes the Pujaka a Shaiva. In the course, after going through Veda and other scriptures and being indoctrinated in the Mantra

by right Guru, he becomes a Vaishnava. Truthful thoughts and good manners are reflected in his character. Being Vaishnavite he worships Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswar with Tulsi leaves (Holy basil plant) and hence - there is no bar in offering Naibedya to Sri Balabhadra Devi Subhadra and Sri Jagannath with Tulsi leaves. Kaulachar or family tradition is in his heritage. In tantric scriptures Kula is shakti and Akula is Shiva; and their union is Kaula. Hence the conduct or tradition based on this realisation is called Kaulachar.

Evolution of Jagannath Cult.

the prevalent worshipping laws notwithstanding it can be summarised as following -

1. From the beginning of time immemorial, Sri Devi or Mahalakshmi was worshipped in this Pitha or holy place by its founder - preceptor Parshuram. The sage Medha worshipped the Goddess for many years and this holy place was Medha's hermitage then : In course of time kings and Rulers came to know of the Goddess and when they derived the desired boons from her worship, built a temple reputedly known after her as Shree Mandir. That Sri Devi flanked by two elephants on both of her sides is reverentially attributed as Gaja Lakshmi.
2. During Sri Devis' years of worship, Madhav - worship was initiated. Madhav, the husband of the pre-dominant mother, is usually Vishnu image. Since Sri Devi was the main - Goddess, separate temple with a separate platform and throne were built for Madhav. That Madhav was subsequently attributed as Sri Nrusingh, Sri Nila Madhav and Sri Purusottam (the best male for the one and only mother) worshipped at different stages in various forms.
3. When Sri Devi and Madhav were worshipped separately Buddhist tantra's powerful influence increased so much that they worshipped Tara and Bhairabi alongwith Sri Devi. Since



elephant and lotus were their national symbols, Buddhists had no objection to accept Gajalakshmi. Hence all three deities were worshipped together for many years.

4. Gradually Buddhist influence was humbled and the three images of Tara, Sri Devi and Bhairabi were worshipped by Brahminic followers and Dakshina Kali, Mahalakshmi, and Bimala. The present day temple was not there then. The temple housing the three female images was, in those times, south facing on whose remnants, the present day Ratna Bhandar or the Treasure-house has been constructed. From those times of Buddhist - Tantrics, monolatrous worship came to an end and several deities came to be worshipped.

5. Brahminic religion started worshipping conjugal or multiple images, resulting in worshipping of Durga Madhav, Lakshmi - Nrusingh, Shiva-Parbati etc. developing ultimately in the worship of seven deities on the jewelled - throne of Sri Mandir.

6. Earlier images were of stone or metal, who were subjected to direct worshipping rituals like bathing and brushing of teeth etc; unlike present day's reflections in a metallic mirror. Because of Buddhistic influence male and female images were treated as brothers and sisters, exemplified in today's Durga-Madhav worship. Similarly Sri Jagannath and Devi Subhadra are worshipped on the throne as brother and sister.

7. Acharya Sankar worshipped the Purusottam image as Shiva but Acharya Ramanuj worshipped Sri Jagannath and Devi Subhadra as Narayan and his consort Lakshmi. During the middle period of both the Acharyas, the present day's temple has been built and it is, instead of being south facing is east facing. Sri Balabhadra, Sri Subhadra and Sri Jagannath were unitedly worshipped as Purusottam, who in course of time were divided to three entities.

8. In the beginning, the wooden deities were enlivened and worshipped in Gundicha temple, who were brought to the present day temple (Sri Mandir) after the new one was constructed and as aforesaid Mahalakshmi, Dakshina Kali and Bimala were shifted to other temples.

The prevalent worshipping rituals of the holy trinity are idealistic specimen for the people of Orissa. Customs and manners of Oriyas are influenced by humanised treatment bestowed to the deities. Orissa's culture and civilisation are founded on this. People of the country and abroad consider the culture of Orissa, as that of Lord Jagannath, which provides necessary moral protection to their day to day life, inculcating a sense of divine devotion in them. Equality and fraternity of all caste, creed and religion are the embracing culture of Sri Jagannath. In brief, Orissa is Sri Jagannath and Sri Jagannath is Orissa.

As a result of accomplishment of rigorous spiritual endeavour of innumerable ascetics, sages, saints and Acharyas, Sri Jagannath, Sri Subhadra and Sri Balabhadra are worshipped in Shree Mandir, representing Brahma (the supreme), Maya (the illusion) and Jiva (the mortal being). Devotees throughout the world worship them as Omnipotent Absolute Supreme manifested in the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswar for strusti (the creation), sthiti (the existence) and Pralaya (the total destruction) respectively. Daru Brahma Jagannath responds to the frantic prayers of distressed persons all around the universe; notwithstanding their faith or religion. He is therefore, truly Sri Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe.

(The original text in Oriya by Mahamohapaddhyaya Pandit Harihar Mohapatra, Puri has been recreated in English by the author.)

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Magnanimity of Mahabahu

Er. Niranjan Rath

His Chariot stops on the Bada Danda near Balagandi,
Every year in the memory of devotee Salabega;
Oh! What a relation between Lord and His Bhakta,
Which can't be forgotten for ever.

By His grace Manai Sahu had relieved,
The pain in the throat of the heron bird;
To value his devotional greatness,
At Kandagoda a replica of the Divine Trinity were installed.

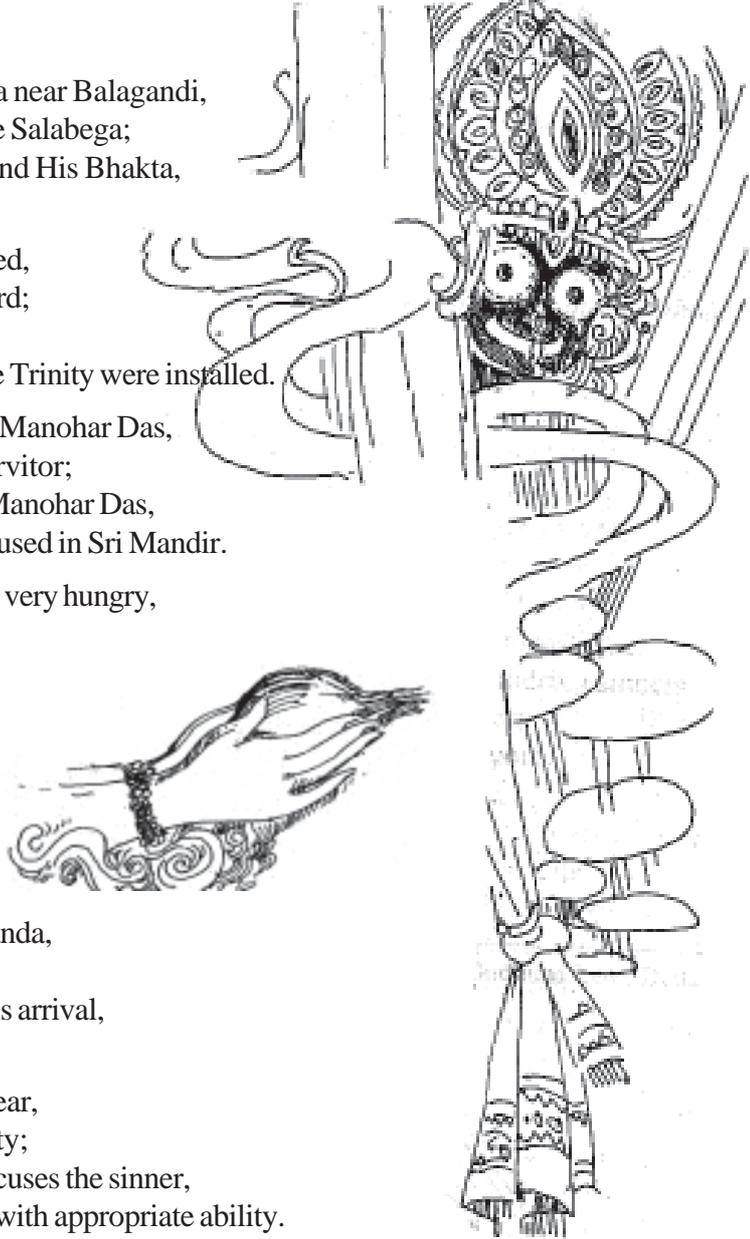
The dried lotus flowers of Mahatma Manohar Das,
Were refused to decorate Him by servitor;
By the devotional determination of Manohar Das,
Again the flowers turned fresh were used in Sri Mandir.

The family of Bandhu Mohanty were very hungry,
Knowing his deep devotion;
He had offered food in gold Thali,
In disguise as a Brahmin.

Dashia Bauri offered coconut,
With prayer from core of his heart;
As He is the friend of devotee,
Accepted it as devotional gift.

The great devotee Swami Rashikananda,
Prayed for His Darshan in the car;
The car didn't move and waited till his arrival,
As He is the Bhaktabatsal forever.

His car festival is celebrated every year,
It teaches us brotherhood and equality;
He blesses to the living being and excuses the sinner,
By His grace the downtrodden rises with appropriate ability.



Er.Niranjan Rath lives at S-2/617, Niladri Vihar, PO-Sailashree Vihar, Bhubaneswar-21.



Car Festival in the Travelogue of Mahmud-Bin-Amir Wali

Dr. Mohammed Yamin

The temple of Jagannath has become a full grown religious center of Hindus all over the world. It is the epicenter of several religious sects. Evidences of many religious reformers and philosophers visited the Jagannath temple on pilgrimage for spiritual perfection. Simultaneously, it has fascinated the pilgrim and traveler across the globe, i.e., China, Persia, Central Asia and European countries. These legendary travelers have left their firsthand account of the Jagannath temple and its historic Car Festival in their travelogue. The earliest European account was given by Friar Odoric in 1321 C.E.¹ In the process the first Persian account to elaborate the majesty of Jagannath temple is Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi 1361 C.E.² The famous historian of the great Akbar, Abdul Fazl cited a precise record of the Jagannath temple and its Car Festival.³ The author of Riyaz-us-Salatin 1788 C.E. Ghulam Hussain Salim has also



recorded the events of the temple.⁴ Similarly the European travelers of 17 century C.E. like, William Burton, Sebastin Monrique, Bernier and Thomas Bowri have highlighted the affairs of the Jagannath temple.

The manuscript of one such 17th century travelogue of Mahmud-bin-Amirwali has recently come to light entitled Bah-rul-Asrar,⁵ one copy of the original manuscript is now in the collections of Indian Office Library in London, England and the other is in T a s h k e n d , Uzbekistan. The manuscript has already been published by Riaz-ul-Islam of the Institute

of Central and West Asian Studies, Karachi University, Pakistan.⁶

The Author's Nativity

The travelogue of Mahmud-bin-Amirwali is an important source material for 17th century socio-cultural history of Orissa. He was born in 1595 C.E. at Balkh in Afghanistan. Hence, he is



often referred as Balkhi. Learning and travelling was his main interest. He visited India in 1625 C.E. and remained for seven years. He visited places like Delhi, Mathura, Banaras, Allahbad, Puri, Cuttack, Konark, Golkonda and Hyderabad, etc. The purpose of his journey to India was for observation of Indian culture and sightseeing. His visit was prompted by his curiosity to acquire knowledge about India. Amirwali had deep interest for Hindu temples and practices of its rituals. During his journey he studied a good number of books like, Suwar-ul-Aqalim, Kitab-ul-Bayan and Masalik-ul-Mawalik,⁷ and the books of history and culture of India. Mahmud-bin-Amirwali's longest stay in India was at Cuttack where he stayed for more than two years. Then he joined the service of Baqar Khan, the Subedar of Orissa. Amirwali described the Subedar as a "well-versed in history, poetry, music and calligraphy". The author elaborated the reliable record of the Jagannath temple, Sun temple of Konark and the people of Cuttack. He has comprehensive report of his visit in Orissa.

His Sojourn to the Jagannath Temple

The author started his journey to Puri with a group of devotees numbering around 5000 from Midnapore (West Bengal) which he mentioned as "the first Kesba of all Kesbas of Orissa". It took them about one month to reach Puri. The devotees used to recite Haribol all the way mixed up together. They took light food in course of their pilgrimage to Jagannath temple and "never opened the door for any fun and cheerful conversation with one another". They also sleep and eat little during the journey. The author reached Puri with the group of pilgrims of the first day of Ramazan or Ramadhan which fell on the 20th May, 1626 C.E. When he reached there he was thrilled to see the surroundings with a large number

of Pilgrims. He stated "the plain I saw so long, broad and crowded it was to such an extent that the imagination was too weak to calculate the correct estimate".⁸

He recorded the following verse in his travelogue about the Jagannath temple:

- (a) There is a temple like sanctuary of heart. All the idols therein are the expectorant of heart.
- (b) Roses and tulips rub their foreheads on that thresh-hold in such a way that they compelled the spectators to prostrate.

It appears that the sanctity and religious atmosphere of the place made him overwhelmed with joy.

Elaboration of the Jagannath Temple

In another verse he described the various rituals related with Car Festival of the Lord. The author mentioned that "the height of the temple is 150 zira (cubit) and the surface of it is 60 zira". The temple was built with stones which are inserted with one another. The Hindus have free access into the temple. Although we cannot say definitely whether the Muslims had their free access into the shrine during the Mughal period. Amirwali has mentioned that the Muslims were not allowed to enter into the temple. Hence, he concealed his identity of Muslim and entered into the temple and enjoyed the beauty of the Jagannath temple.⁹ It is evident from Haft-Iqllim of Amin Ahmad Razi that "in the medieval period there was no hindrance to Muslims entering into the temple of Jagannath". Both the communities used to honour their shrines respectively. There are records in the Orissa State Archives, testifying to the Hindu-Muslim cultural assimilation through ages. Privilage section of both the communities donated land and money for the maintenance of respective shrines. Thus, to say temple of Jagannath is a unique centre of cultural synthesis.



Mention may be made here that; Mahunta Seva of the temple was usually entrusted with a person belonging to a sect of Muslim.

The superintendent of the Jagannath temple, the Raja of Puri once passed an order to appoint a Hindu in case a person of Muslim sect was not available to perform the Mahunta Seva; this was corroborated by Ghulam-Hussain Salim, the author of Riyaz-us-Salatin. Citing an account of Orissa on the eve of its conquest by the Afghans, Ghulam- Hussain Salim, further says that, "And Jagannath which is a big temple of the Hindus is in this subah. It is said when the Hindus reach Purusottam where Jagannath is, first they shave their heads like Musalmans and at the first door of the house of Shaikh Kabir who was a great saint of his time and whose parent were weavers they eat and drink his food and water which is called as Torani. After having done so they proceed to worship Lord Jagannath. At Purusottam Hindus unlike their practice elsewhere, eat together with Musalmans and other races. And variety of cooked food sell in the bazaar and Hindus eat, drink together".

In a literary verse Mahmud-bin-Amirwali in his travelogue described the religious atmosphere of the great temple, the English translation is as follows:

- (i) The temple which was full of prostration. The sight of which was admonitory.
- (ii) I saw an idol which was frightened from the worshipper as Jesus Christ suffered in the Jail of Tahmat.
- (iii) He hide his face in the veil being Pandulons in bashfulness and kept silence in calm of error.
- (iv) But the worshippers were seeking enjoyments from Him, like a leaf of flower which seeks colour and fragrance.

(v) The sight of the prayer was so warm, that eye of a group became intoxicated.

(vi) And when they returned their face towards Jagannath, the earth became full of colour and fragrance like a garden.

His description of the Car Festival and its related rituals.

Amirwali Balkhi's description of car festival is very important for the researchers for further research. He stated that "the car consisted of ten wheels, circumference of each being 20 zira, the length from the ground to the top would be more than 80 Arrah (a cubit, a fathom). The idol known as Jagannath was installed at the top pedestal and the tower of the chariot was decorated with coloured silk, nearly 500 devotees including those of Brahmins, Rajas, and Zamindars from different parts of the country offered voluntary services for making the procession ready. About 100 Kalabantas and Natis (Nachuni) were engaged for reciting devotional songs to Hari and Govinda and when the procession moved they also accompanied singing and dancing on the way".¹⁰

An important fact of the above description is that, the author described only one car and one idol. Kalabantas and Natis (Nachuni) are also significant for further research. The author sadly described the instances of self-immolation of the Hindus by throwing themselves under the chariot of the Lord. Infact, he criticized the occurrence of self-immolation. To conclude his description of the temple, the author described in the subsequent literary verse, English translation cited as below.¹¹

- (i) The temple is associated with the sea. It (the sea) knocks the head against the great wishful persons.
- (ii) It carries pearls and gems in such a quantity that it seems as if it embraces a sea of Jewels.



(iii) How delightful thing on embellished Hindu says that the temple is based on the steep waves of the shore.

(iv) See the twisting weaves in their double habit. How they came and go back twisting and twisting.

Indeed, a unique feature of the Jagannath worship is the absence of class distinction so far as sharing the holy food is concerned. The social equality is maintained which made a strong appeal to other religious believers. The great poets Salbeg, Uzir beg and many Muslim poets are the glaring examples of this social equality of Orissan society through which they developed their Bhajanas, Chaupadis and Janana in praise of Lord Jagannath. Thus, it can be concluded that, the temple of Jagannath is the epicentre of cultural synthesis in Orissa.

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Alam Chandi Temple at Puri

Dr. Ratnakar Mohapatra

The temple of Alam Chandi is one of the neglected Sakta shrines of Puri. It is exactly located in the Kumbharapara area near the Atharanala Bridge of the Puri town. Being situated on the main entrance of Puri town, the shrine of Devi Alam Chandi seems to have occupied a distinct place in the Kshetra of Lord Jagannatha. Skanda Purana has made a reference to Alam Chandi residing in the northern side of the Jagannatha temple to protect the Ratnavedi.¹ Considering the sanctity of the shrine R.L. Mitra records that Devi Alam Chandi is one of the consorts of the Asthasambhus of the Kshetra of Lord Jagannatha.² Devi Alam Chandi is generally considered as one of the Asthashaktis who protects the Antarvedi on the Nairrita corner of Srikshetra.³ From architectural point of view, this temple is not so significant but from the religious aspect it is one of the important Chandi shrines of the Kshetra of Lord of Jagannatha. So some of the devotees who come to visit Lord Jagannatha temple, they also visit the temple of Devi Alam Chandi. A modest attempt has been made in this article to highlight the detailed art and architecture of the temple of Alam Chandi.

Art and Architecture of the Temple:-

The temple of Alam Chandi consists of three structures such as Vimana, Jagamohana and



Natamandapa. It is built in sand stones. Both the structures of Vimana and Jagamohana are the earlier and these are thickly plastered with lime mortar. But the Natamandapa of the temple is a modern structure. The temple faces to east.

Vimana:

The vimana of the Alam Chandi temple is a Pancha Ratha Rekha Deula and its height is about 30 feet from the surface of the temple complex.⁴ The base of the bada is square of 15 feet. The bada is panchanga type i.e. having five vertical divisions such as pabhaga, tala jangha, bandhana, upper jangha and baranda. The pabhaga of the bada is devoid of decorative ornamentation. The intervening recesses between the pagas of the tala jangha as well as upper jangha are filled with simha vidalas, gaja vidalas, alaskanyas and dancing female figures with



musical instruments in their hands. The bandhana of the bada consists of single moulding. The baranda of the bada is completely undecorated.

The central niches of the three sides of the bada of vimana are housed with the Parsvadevata images of Devi Sodasi, Devi Kalika and Devi Matangi. Devi Sodasi is the Parsvadevata of the southern side. The six armed Devi Sodasi has been installed on the plain pedestal. Her left side hands display pothi or jataka, flower and bow while the right side hands hold conch, trident and flower respectively. Devi Kalika is the parsvadevata of the western side. The four armed Devi (Kalika) has been installed on the plain pedestal. She is carved in standing posture on the portrait body of Lord Siva. Here, the Devi wears a garland of skulls in Her body. She holds khadga in right upper hand, a pana patra in right lower hand, the backbone of a man in left upper hand and a cutting human head in left lower hand respectively. Devi Matangi is the parsvadevata of the northern side. The four handed Devi image has been installed on the double petalled lotus pedestal. She displays pasa in right upper hand, Sivalingam in right lower hand, ankusa in left upper hand and a pot containing (stone) object in left lower hand. She wears a garland of flowers in Her body. All the side deities of the temple are made of granite.

The bada of the vimana is surmounted by the curvilinear superstructure, which displays five pagas. The entire gandi of the vimana is thickly plastered with lime mortar. So the original decorative elements of the gandi are not visible. The middle portion of the raha paga of the gandi is projected with jhapa simha on each side. Dopichha lions have been fixed on the top of the kanika pagas of the gandi. Deula Charini figures are inserted in the four cardinal directions of the beki above rahas. They are acting as the

supporting elements to the amalaka sila of the mastaka.

The mastaka of the vimana consists of beki, amalaka sila, khapuri, kalasa, ayudha (chakra) and dhvaja. The sanctum preserves the image of Devi Alam Chandi as the presiding deity of the temple. Here, Alam Chandi is in the form of four armed Durga image. She has been installed on the portrait body of a corpse, which lies upon the Simhasana of 1 foot high. The Simhasana of the presiding deity measures 3 feet in length and 2 feet in width.⁵ Devi Alam Chandi displays knife in right upper hand, abhaya mudra in right lower hand, trident in left upper hand and rosary in left lower hand respectively. The simhasana of the deity is decorated with scroll works, flower devices and creeper designs. There is an image of Mahisamardini Durga, the replica of the presiding deity, found from the simhasana and it is made of brass. The backside of the head of Devi (presiding deity) is decorated with trefoil makara headed arch. Inner walls of the sanctum are completely plain. There is a Sivalinga made of black chlorite found on the left side of Devi Alam Chandi. It has been kept on the floor of the sanctum. He is locally worshipped as 'Krutivasa Mahadeva'.⁶ The doorway of the sanctum is devoid of decorative ornamentations.

Jagamohana:-

The jagamohana of the temple is a pidha deula and its height is about 20 feet from the surface of the temple complex.⁷ The bada of the jagamohana is pancanga type like the bada of the vimana. The base of the bada is square of 15 feet. All the component parts of the bada are devoid of embellishment.

The bada of the Jagamohana is surmounted by the pyramidal superstructure. It consists of two potalas; the lower and upper potalas, which



contain three and two pidhas respectively. Each pidha is decorated with tankus in all sides. Two jhapa simhas are projected on both the southern and northern side rahas of the gandi in successive order. One jhapa simha is also projected on the middle raha paga of the western side of the sikhara. Dopichha lions are projected on the top of kanika pagas of the gandi. Deula Charini figures are found at the four cardinal directions of the beki above rahas. They are acting as the supporting elements to the amalaka sila of the mastaka.

The mastaka of the jagamohana consists of beki, ghanta above which there is another beki, amalaka sila, khapuri, kalasa, ayudha(chakra) and dhvaja.

The jagamohana has two doorways; one on the eastern side and another in the southern side. The doorway of the southern side is completely plain. The doorjambes and the doorway lintel are not decorated with any element. Navagrahas are carved on the architrave above the doorway lintel. They are all in Padmasana posture with usual attributes in their hands.

The inner walls of the jagamohana are mostly undecorated. There is only an image of Mahavira installed on the plain pedestal. His right hand holds a huge rock (Gandha Mardana Parvata) and the left hand possesses a gada (mace) as the usual attributes.

Natamandapa:-

The natamandapa of the temple is a modern flat roof structure and its height is about 12 feet. The structure is built in the 2nd half of the twentieth century. The outer walls of the natamandapa are entirely undecorated. Lion, the conventional mount of Devi (Alam Chandi) is installed in the floor of the natamandapa. The niches of the inner

walls of natamandapa are housed with Dasamahavidya figures. They are such as Kali, Tara, Bhairavi, Chinna Mastha, Dhumabati, Sodasi, Matangi, Kamala, Bhubanesvari and Bagalamukhi. Brief descriptions of the Dasamahavidyas are mentioned as follows:

The four armed image of Kali has been installed on the portrait body of Siva. She displays gada in right upper hand, varada mudra in right lower hand, a blood pot in left upper hand and cutting human head in left lower hand respectively. She wears a garland of skulls in Her body.

The four handed image of Devi Tara is carved in standing posture on the portrait body of a male figure. She displays abhaya mudra in right upper hand, a pana para in right lower hand, khadga in left upper hand and scissor in left lower hand respectively. She also wears a garland of skulls in Her body.

The four armed image of Devi Bhairavi is carved in seated posture on lion and one of Her legs is on the chest of an asura. Her right upper hand displays chakra, left upper hand holds conch and the lower two hands in the posture of holding trident but here the trident is completely missing.

The two armed image of Devi Chhinna mastha has been installed on the plain pedestal. She displays khadga and own cutting head in her two hands. Blood is being sprayed from Her cutting neck portion. Two female attendant figures are standing on the both sides of Devi Chhinna mastha.

The two armed image of Devi Dhumavati is carved in kneeling posture. Her two hands are engaged in domestic work with a kula (winnowing fan).

The four armed image of Devi Sodasi is installed on the lotus, which rose from the navel



of Lord Siva. Her four hands display bow, arrow, flower and one hand is empty.

The four armed image of Devi Matangi has been installed on the plain pedestal and She possesses khadga, gada, ankusa and pasa in Her four hands.

The four handed image of Devi Kamala has been installed on the lotus petalled pedestal. She displays gada, snake, abhaya mudra and varada mudra in Her four hands.

The four armed image of Devi Bhubanesvari has been installed on the flower shaped pedestal. Her upper two hands display khadga and shield while the lower two hands are in dancing posture.

The two armed image of Devi Bagalamukhi is carved in ugra posture. Probably, She is in gesture of killing an asura who is in kneeling posture before Devi.

All the Dasamahavidya figures are carefully housed in the niches of the inner walls of natamandapa. Most probably, these figures are installed during the construction period of the natamandapa.

The gaja-simhas or lions on croachant elephants are installed on the both sides of the main doorway of the natamandapa hall. They are acting as the dvarapalas of the temple.

It's Relation with Lord Jagannatha Temple:-

During the time of Navakalevara, Darubrahmas(sacred logs) coming from different places for the making of deities were initially placed in front of the Alam Chandi temple and entered with a procession. The mammoth crowds of devotees accompany the logs with singing and sankirtana even today, when the sacred logs are carried through villages to reach Puri.⁸ The procession is accompanied by Gajapati Maharaja of Puri, saints, mahantas of mathas, sevayats of

the Jagannatha temple. Chatras are placed on the Darubrahmas and chamaras are used in the procession.⁹ The Darubrahmas of Lords are taken here to the Jagannatha temple for making images. The temple of Alam Chandi is connected with the Saptapuri puja of Lord Jagannatha temple. On the day of Saptapuri Amabasya, Saptapuri is sent to this temple from the Jagannatha temple for bhoga. It is reported that in good old days Raja and Maharajas and other distinguished guests, stayed here for obtaining permission to enter into Srikshetra.¹⁰

Now the temple is being managed by the priest (Padhi) community of Puri town.

Date of the Temple:

There is no authentic historical record with regard to the approximate date of the temple of Devi Alam Chandi. Dr. B.K. Ratha has mentioned that the Alam Chandi temple was constructed in the sixteenth century A.D.¹¹ On the basis of the architectural features, the construction period of the Alam Chandi temple can be tentatively assigned to the 2nd half of the 16th century A.D. The natamandapa of the temple is built in the twentieth century.

Conclusion

Thus it is known from the above discussion that the temple of Alam Chandi is one of the Asthashakti shrines of Purusottama Kshetra. The parsvadevatas of the vimana are possibly the original side deities of the temple. Dasamahavidyas, which are found in the natamandapa of the temple, are certainly the images of modern period. Although the architectural features of the temple is not so significant but from the religious point of view, it is one of the notable Chandi shrines of Puri town. This temple has a close relation with the temple of Lord Jagannatha in the times of some specific



rituals and festivals. At present the surrounding of the Alam Chandi temple is in neglected condition. So, it requires proper attention not only by the state government but also by public for attraction of the pilgrims and tourists of different parts of India as well as abroad.

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Chandan Yatra at holy Narendra Tank, Puri



Tantricism in the Cult of Lord Jagannath

Dr. Sidhartha Kanungo

The cult of Jagannath is not a sectarian religion, but a cosmopolitan and eclectic philosophy. In course of time, the cult of Jagannath took an Aryanised form and various major faiths like Saivism, Saktism, Vaishnavism, Tantricism, Jainism and Buddhism have been assimilated into this cult. Whatever may be the origin of this cult, it has been admitted both by the scholars belonging to different religious traditions and faiths that this culture is centre around which in course of time divergent currents and cross currents have revoked.

However, this paper makes an attempt to analyse the influence of Trantricism on the cult of Lord Jagannath.

Tantricism in a number of ways influences Jagannath cult. Jagannath is worshipped as God of Tantra. We notice various Nyasas such as Sadanga-nyasa, Kasbadi-nyasa, Matrkanyasa, Sodha-nyasa and Mahasodha-nyasa in the daily mode of worship of Lord Jagannath. These bear testimony to the influence of tantricism on the cult of Lord Jagannath.



Yantras play an important role in tantricism. Various Yantras have been engraved on the Ratnasimhasan on which Lord Jagannath, Lord Balbhadra and Devi Subhadra are worshipped. In the daily worship of Lord and also at the time

of Darupratistha (installation of new image), representation of Sri Yantra, Bhubaneswari, Yantra and various Mandalas are also noticed. Jagannath is worshipped as Krushna-Basudev. But due to the influence of Tantricism, Jagannath is perceived as 'Dakshin Kali', Balabhadra as 'Jyotirmayeem Tara' and Devi Subhadra as 'Adyasakti Bhubaneswari'.

It is known from different tantric texts that Orissa as well as Puri, which is otherwise known as 'Srikshetra', is a great tantric pitha or place. After the death of Sati in 'Dakshya Yanga'. Lord Shiva became angry and danced (which is known as Tandav Nrutya along with the dead body of Sati. Different parts of Her body fell on sixty-four different places of the Universe. And this is the mythology or story behind the creation of sixty-four Saktipithas. However,



'Kalika Purana' describes the four important Saktipitha and Orissa is one of them.

Let us come to see another aspect of the influence of tantricism on the cult of Lord Jagannath. God's offering which is known as Mahaprasad is associated with tantricism. Prasad of Jagannath when reoffered to Vimala becomes Mahaprasad. Vimala has been described as 'Bhairavi' in different tantric texts.

Moreover, 'Panchasakha'(five friends)-Balaram, Ananta, Yasobanta, Achyuta and Jagannath were Vaishnavas. But we find the description of Yantra, Mantra and Tantra in the vast literature composed by them. According to 'Panchasakha' Jagannath is both Saguna and Nirguna Brahma. Yantra, Mantra and Tantra are nothing but Saguna Sadhana. According to them, one can realize God in his own body by both Saguna Sadhana and Nirguna Sadhana.

We notice, Tantric Panchamakara in the worship of Lord Jagannath which deserve special mention. Here fish is substituted by green vegetables mixed with Hingu, meat by Adapachedi(ginger), wine by green coconut water offered in bell metal pots and Maithuna by the dance of Devadasi. The tantric way of worship is also seen in the Temple of Vimala where animal

sacrifice is made during the Mahaastami. This is known as 'Bamachar Paddhati'.

The famous Car Festival of Lord Jagannath is held in the month of Asadha. This Car Festival is also known as 'Nabadina Yatra' according to tantric Philosophy this 'nine' number is very auspicious. Moreover, Sudarshan' or Bajra is kept in the Chariot of Devi Subhadra. This is nothing but the influence of Bajrajana sect of Buddhism.

It is a fact that 'Sabar Tantra', 'Buddha Tantra' and 'Hindu Tantra' have influenced Jagannath Cult to a great extent. He is worshipped as 'Sabari Narayan', 'Buddha' and Jagannath, according to 'Sabar Tantra', 'Buddha Tantra' and 'Hindu Tantra' respectively, Vimala is the goddess of 'Buddha Tantra'. Jagannath is perceived as 'Bhairav' and Vimala as 'Bhairavi'.

No body can deny the influence of tantricism in the temple of Lord Jagannath. But it is very difficult to say which tantra has influenced Jagannath Cult the most.

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Sri Krishna and Lord Jagannath

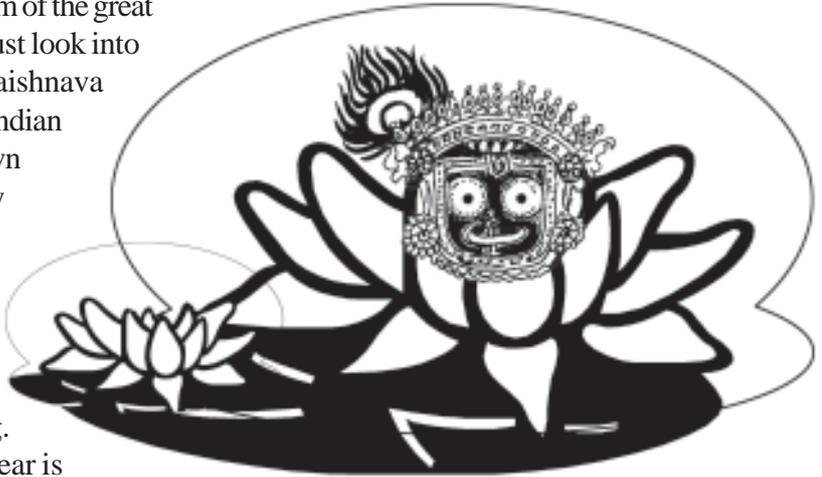
Somanath Khuntia

Before dealing with the Puja system of the great Jagannath Temple of Puri, we must look into the real definition of the terms Vaishnava and Vaishnavism. According to Indian epics, there are three deities, known as Trishakti, Trideva or Trio. They are Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the maintainer and Shiva the destroyer. These three attributes are indispensable in all matters; even now in science and in the simple construction of a building. Everything we think, feel, and hear is subject to these three influences, as told by the ancient Rishies in the days of yore.

It is most interesting to note, however, that Avatars, or Divine Beings who incarnate on earth as man from time to time to uplift humanity, are never born. They come to earth in a divine way, from Vishnu, the Maintainer Himself. There are no Avatars of Brahma or Shiva. According to Ishabasya Upanishad, all creation is filled with Divinity.

*"Ishabasyamidam sarbam jat kichnitya
dagatya jagat."*

That which is created is easy to destroy, but difficult to maintain and protect. For this reason, Lord Vishnu Himself comes in the form



of a divine man, or Avatar, as a father would come to protect his children.

*'Jada jada hi dharmasya
Glanirbhabati Bharat
Abhyuthanamdharmasya
Tadatmanam Srujamyaham
Paritranaya Sadhunam
Binasaya cha Duskrutam.'*

"Whenever problems overwhelm the world,
To uphold Dharma, or Righteousness,
I incarnate from age to age."

From the word Vishnu, "Vaishnava" is derived, that is, one who worships Vishnu, the maintainer and protector. This worship or spiritual practice is known as "Vaishnavism".



In Vaishnavism, we do not give so much emphasis to Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, such as:

1. Yama- Non-violence, having truth, compassion, forgiveness, purity
2. Niyama- Spiritual practice, puja, worship, japa or telling holy names, giving alms
3. Asana-such as Hatha Yoga
4. Pranayama-breathing exercises
5. Pratyahara-worship through forms, known as Sakara, formless worship, known as Nirakara, and seeing God in all, known as Atmabhava.
6. Dharana- one- pointedness, or forbearance
7. Dhyana-meditation
8. Samadhi-God realization

Here what alone is essential is Bishwasa, or Faith, and Anuraga, or Loyalty and Affection, and most importantly, Abhimana or Unconditional Love.

"Bishwasa" means having complete faith, with no doubt, blind faith even. With such faith in her Lord Krishna, while uttering His name, the poet-saint Mirabai drank poison. The poison turned to nectar. "Anuraga" is the feeling of loyalty, even if it is only one-sided. The child Dhruva meditated in the forest, not to get anything. But when he had a vision of Lord Vishnu, he was given a place in the sky, known as Dhruva Star. When one gives flowers to God, decorates God, brings food to God, and meditates on Him out of such deep affection, with no thought of results, but simply as an offering, this is Anuraga.

"Abhimana" is the highest feeling for a Vaishnavite. It is that found only between a husband and wife, or a devotee and God. It is love of the deepest kind, as in the union of the sun and its ray, a flower and its scent; or sugar

and its sweetness. So mixed with good feelings is it that even anger is not anger, and sadness is not sorrow. The main Gopi of Krishna's childhood days, Radha, was the foremost example of this love. When Krishna left Brindaban for Dwaraka, He did not return. Four days became four years and more, although He had promised to return. Radha one day tells her friends like this.

"Krishna is now busy in Dwaraka. He is not coming. I will die one day. Please, my dear sisters, you can do this one thing for me. At that time, carry my dead body on the path where He once walked. Over it you throw a cloth on which is written only Krishna, Krishna, and Krishna. Write His name on my breasts. If by chance the sound of a sweet flute is heard, turn my head so that its sweet music will enter my ear. This is my last prayer to you, my dear sisters. Let my dead body also be content that I have been with Him, and let all remember that here is a lady who liked Him so much."

In Vaishnavism complex rituals are not at all necessary. The essential thing is only this Radha-Bhava, the Love of Radha for Sri Krishna, and Anurakti, the feeling that Radha had of being inseparable from God. This Anurakti is the feeling of treating God as a man; no third party is required. There is just the devotee and God, not a God made of wood or brass, but alive and one, we can talk to in a human way. What is true to us is true to Him also. A true Vaikuntha or Heaven is not far away, but right here in the midst of the home. God is with us like a member of the family. Krishna Himself said in Bhagavat Geeta.

*"Mada Bhaktra Jatra Gayanti
Tatra Tisthami Narada"*

"I do not live in Vaikuntha or Dwaraka, but where My devotees sing and remember Me, I am there."



A true Vaishnavite is a selfless servant and surrenders to this almighty, before acting. He does not believe in his own strength or worldly power or wealth. To him, his body and the whole world consist of only two things. Chetana and Achetana." Achetana" means non-awareness and refers to the physical transient blood and bones that make up the body. "Chetana" means awareness and refers to the invisible and Supreme Purusha, or Divine Being residing within this pure shell. When a Vaishnavite surrenders, he forgets the misery of "Achetana" and communicates directly with the invisible God dwelling inside himself.

Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha, Adishankar, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, they all had glimpses of Godhood. Their ways and means were different, but their goal was the same. But Sri Krishna came to be the symbol for Vaishnavism.

If a devotee thinks of God to be his inner master, closer than the eyelid to the eye, Krishna comes as Krishna Chandra; as friend, Golakchandra; as divine child, Balkrishna; as lover, Gopikrishna; as cowherd boy, Gopal Krishna, as the one who steals all hearts, Chitta Chora; as the most attractive in the world, as Krishna Himself. The word "Krishna" means to attract, and from the derivative word of Krishna, "Karsayati iti Krishna." His name also means the excuser of all mistakes. Taking anyone name and its substance, a devotee can reach Krishna. In such a way was He a peculiar and unique Avatar to the world.

Many divine souls and Avatars have come to the world, but only Sri Krishna was called the "Poorna Avatar", the full Avatar having all 16 *kalas*, or divine arts or attributes within Him. They are as follows:

1. Daya - Compassion

2. Dharjya - Patience
3. Kshyama - Forgiveness
4. Nyaya - Justice
5. Nirapeksha - Impartiality
6. Nirasakta - Detachment
7. Tapasya - Meditation and spiritual powers
8. Aparchitta - Invincibility
9. Danasheel - Beneficence, Bestower of all wealth in the world and nature.
10. Saundaryamaya - Beauty Incarnate
11. Nrityajna - Best of dancers
12. Sangitajna - Best of singers
13. Neetibadi - Embodiment of Honesty
14. Satyabadi - Truth itself
15. Sarvagnata - Perfect master of all arts, such as poetry, drama, painting, etc.
16. Sarvaniyanta - Controller of All

So eventhough many sages and seers have come, having divine attributes, such as Compassion, Dharna, Sacrifice, which have helped the world, none was having the spiritual power of Sri Krishna.

Krishna is Brahmanda Pati, "Lord of all the universes, of which this world is only a small part. There are numerous universes not even seen or knowable. Narada tells that for this reason alone all should take shelter in him".

In the Oriya version of Bhagavata, it is told,

*"Brahmanda mala mala hoi /
To lomakupe jhuluthai //"*

"Whole universes are revolving around me, I am here to care for all."

In the last part of Mahabharat, a mysterious connection is made. Sri Krishna told Arjuna,



"Now that the war is over, hear what I want; I wish to take rest in Seealee Lata, a distant forest of creepers. I know all. There while I sleep, I will be killed by site of Jagannath Puri, as stated in Rig Veda,

*"Ato Jutta daru Plabate
Sindhupara aparusiya".*

"Ato" means here, "Jutta" means that, "Daru means wood, Plabate" means floating, "sindhupare" means that side of the ocean, "apuruseya" means not manmade.

"Something will be carved from a log of wood floating on the ocean here (describing the origin of the Murti of Lord Jagannath along the beach of Puri) that cannot be manmade".

About that dense forest more details are given in the ancient Sanskrit text of Jagannath Temple, called Niladri Mahoday, in which the origin of the temple and the basic outline of the Puja systems are described. It is stated that the great Niladri Temple of Lord Jagannath was once on a huge blue hill surrounded by a dense forest. The inhabitants worshipping Lord Jagannath here were tribal people called Dayitapatis. Even today a street of the temple community bears their name, Dayitapati Sahi.

Lord Krishna came here and while resting under a tree, the hunter Jara Sabara appeared he thought the two feet of Sri Krishna to be the ears of a deer, so soft red in color they were. When he realized he killed this Krishna with his bow and arrow, he tried to burn the body. But it was the body of Deva Purusha Himself; it could never be burnt. So he left it at a place by the sea in Puri called Banki Muhana. It becomes a fossil of wood. This marked the beginning of Kali Yuga. After some thousand years passed, King Indradyumna of Nepal had a dream and in the dream, he was told to find the log of wood there in Banki Muhan,

carve an image from it as he saw in this dream, and install it in the great Jagannath Temple of Puri. Thus Sri Krishna became Lord Jagannath for the modern age, and all of His Leelas and past times continue today in the Sri Kshetra of Puri, as they once did in Brindavan.

According to the epic Indra Neelamani and Niladri Mahodaya, it was this same image of Sri Krishna that was being worshipped by Bishwbasu, the tribesman who met King Indradyumna's minister, who had been sent to find the divine Murti.

The image was called Neela Madhava or Nilakanta Bigraha. 'Neela' means the colour of the sky and Kanta' means beautiful. This 'Bigraha' or deity was none other than Ghanashyam, or Sri Krishna Himself. On reaching the tribal man' hut, the minister was fed a sumptuous meal, which he called 'Mahaprasad', or the food of the gods. Wonderful rice preparations and exotic fruits were offered to him. The minister wondered how such a poor man, who himself ate not a grain of rice, could offer or find such food ! The tribal man said it was the Prasad, or blessing of his beloved Lord. All the gods and goddesses of the world bring with them the best foods to offer at the feet of the Murti. The minister begged Bishwvasu to take him to this strange god. But after the minister saw the deity, it vanished. He could only give a description of it to the King.

Thus the birth of Lord Krishna is observed every year in Jagannath Temple, alongwith many holy days connected with His life. Chandan Yatra in the spring is a festival in which the images of Jagannath as Gopi Krishna with Radha, and Madan Mohan, two dancing Krishnas, are taken in procession in Vimanas or Palanquins, to a reservoir and floated on boats for 21 days. This celebration is said to be in remembrance of the loving boat journey of Radha and Krishna on the



river Yamuna. One of these dancing Krishnas is worshipped every day inside the main temple beside Lord Jagannath Himself. Only for Rath Yatra, the great Car Festival of Puri, does the deity of Lord Jagannath emerge from the temple. For all other holy days, it is in His image of Sri Krishna that He comes out.

During Jhulana Yatra, the Festival of swings during the rainy season, the images of Radha and Krishna are set on a flower decorated swing in front of Lord Jagannath. The love songs of Jayadeva's immortal poem, The Geeta Gobinda, are sung before Them for seven days. On smaller Jhulanas the same is done in many monasteries and Ashrams of Puri during this period. An inscription on the great temple reads that only the songs of Krishna as written in Geeta Gobinda must by tradition be sung nightly in the temple. They were sung by Kokila, the last living Devadasi, or temple dancer, before Lord Jagannath while the deity was being dressed for bed. Earlier in the evening, the Bhagabata, recording the childhood pastimes of Sri Krishna and the Gopies, is sung inside the main temple and every tiny street temple of Puri as well.

The name of Sri Krishna is not directly associated with Jagannath, but Subhadra is the same sister Subhadra of Dwapara Yuga, and Balabhadra is called Balaram also, the name of Krishna's elder brother. No epics depict such a Trinity; their names associated only with the glorious life of Sri Krishna. However, in describing Lord Krishna, Narada gave Him the epithet of "Jagannath". "Jagat" means universe and 'Natha' means Lord. Narada says He is the Lord, the directing force behind the Universe. The entire universe proceeds from Him and rests in Him. In Vaishnavism, too the supreme Lord has been described as having two shapes, one with form and the other formless. He is "Akshaya" imperishable, beyond birth and death and

"Akshaya", the universe itself having 100,000 forms. The universe is His dress, His Vishwarupa. He is the uppermost and the nearest. The entire universe is pervaded by Him, as it proceeds again into Him. As is said in Brahma Sanhita,

"Eksada bipra Bahudha Bhabanti"

"From one, I have become many".

Mind, which ever flows like a river and whose speed exceeds even that of wind, is ever drawn to Him, held to me, the one who attracts all, like an iron is drawn to a pure magnet. His five-coloured garland, known as Baijayanti Mala, is the garland of the senses. All the senses, or Indriyas, the five outer ones meant for service to man and the five inner ones for god realization, are held by Him as arrows. The Lord who has no shape assumes shape, out of his great love, His prema, for the good of created beings.

He is Prema Swarupa, the essence of all Vedas. He is fully self-contained and free from destruction of any kind. He knows no birth, no motive, no cause or effect. He is ever mysterious and about whom the only thing that can be said is that He exists always. He is called Basudeva, as is stated by the ancients in the Puranas. "Basu" is derived from the root "Bas" which means to exist. "Deba" is derived from the root "Dib", to glow. Thus "Basudeva, as" means the lustre that exists. His lustre is everywhere and in everything. Everything rests in Him and proceeds from Him. This is how Basudeva, as is described by those who knew.

Basudeva, also means Lord Krishna, the illustrious son of Basudeva, or Basudeva Nandana, in the "Krishna Avatara", as the mysterious bond between the form and formless is ever present 'He alone', Narada says. It is to be known, Surya Sanhita states that those who were Tapi, sages or seers in Satya Yuga, become



Kapi, monkeys with Rama in Tretaya Yuga, and Gopi, cowherd companions of Sri Krishna in Dwapara Yuga, and now Sevakas, or worshippers of Lord Jagannath in Kali Yuga. At least that is the feeling of persons born into families of worshippers in Jagannath Temple, how blessed they are to again be connected with and serve Sri Krishna. Not only do they feel themselves to be gopies, but the three main worshippers of the three deities are bound by tradition to wear their hair long. They do Puja as a lady before the Supreme Purusha. Not even a day went by that the Gopies were without Krishna, so for the Sevakas not even a single day can go by without going to Lord Jagannath in the temple. They think of Lord Jagannath for everything, from birth and naming ceremonies, to marriage and death. "He is life and death to us, without him what are we to do". Such was the feeling of the gopies. All worshippers in Jagannath Temple may not be true seekers, but the feeling is universal among them that "Lord Jagannath gives us everything".

There are four types of devotion. First, a devotee remember God in times of troubles. This is Artee, or danger. When he faces a tiger, he is a devotee and calls on God. But when the tiger is gone, he forgets, Droupadi called on Krishna when she was in distress in the Kaurava's Court. Krishna heard and gave her a Sari of such length, no one could disrobe her.

The second type of devotion is Artharathi, or worldly desires like to be a loan officer in a bank, one submits an application before God and prays for this or that to be given, be it wealth, health, fame, or a good marriage. Arjuna sought Krishna's help to win the war and regain the lost Kingdom.

The third type of devotion is a Jignasu, a true seeker, one eager to know of Jagannath, what is divinity, this world, what is the meaning of life.

Krishna's companion in Dwaraka, Udhava, was a true seeker and Krishna sent him to Brindavan to learn realization from Gopies.

The forth and final type of devotee is a Jnani, one who knows God, who has some direct experience of him. Sankaracharya was such a one, but so were Radha, and Yashoda, Krishna's foster mother, and all the Gopies. When Udhava asked them about Krishna, Yashoda simply cried and the other Gopies were silent and could not utter a word finally Radha said.

"He has not gone from us. He is Kalia Kamala, The black lotus; He is the dark rain cloud. How can He leave us? He is the very Life Force in us; He is never apart from us".

Just as Sri Krishna was to the Gopies in Dwapara Yuga, Lord Jagannath is now to Sevakas and devotees alike in Jagannath Puri. On first meeting, or sight, He is Abyakta, unknown. Seeing his strange form and manner, one may not like it and may be full of doubts. But after some time, Jagannath becomes Byakta, known. The devotee or Sevaka has felt something, some divine touch, and divine intervention. He thinks as if he knows Jagannath. He feels Him, he slaps his own cheeks in front of Jagannath for all his stupid mistakes. He closes his own ears, to block out other's doubts. However, again after sometime, it becomes the daily habit to go for Darshan of Jagannath in the temple and Lord Jagannath becomes again Abyakta, unknowable. He is again full of mystery, but now there is no doubt, only inexpressible joy in beholding Him.

These feelings of Byakta and Abyakta are the day to day experiences of a devotee with God, just like the ever changing movements of the ocean and its waves, or the play of light and darkness, or the indescribable beauty of clouds passing across the sky. Worshippers in the temple take Jagannath to be their Lord and Master, as an



woman takes her husband. They sing lines from Adishanker's poem "Kadachit Kalandi Tata Bipina", as the cars move down the Grand Road on Rath Yatra days.

*"Jagannath Swami Nayana Pathagami
Bhavatu Me"*

"Oh Lord Jagannath May our eyes ever follow in your footsteps",

This sort of Gopi-Bhav develops from childhood as the father teaches his son how to do his hereditary Seva in the temple. It is strange how in the modern world Sevakas maintain their families. Some have outside careers, but for their temple service they receive no salary. They rely solely on Jagannath Himself to maintain them. If food offered to Jagannath, called Mahaprasad from its earliest origins, is not arranged, no marriage ceremony in the temple community can be performed. This holy food of Lord Jagannath must be distributed, or no rites are sanctified.

This is the attachment of Radha with Sri Krishna. As Radha had only Krishna to see, touch, and to daily, so the worshippers of the temple have only Jagannath in their lives. In previous generations fathers knew only two places, the home and the temple. So during Car festival days, when Jagannath left the main temple for nine days, the worshippers also left their houses for the same period and slept on the road beside the huge cars and ate only Prasad of fruits thrown to Jagannath. This is again the feeling of Radha, as She, her house, her husband, everything, when she heard the call of Krishna's flute. If there are sorrows and difficulties, it is his wish. If it is His wish, we will also be saved.

The word Radha, or Radhika, is composed of "Radhika" "Ra" means beauty, strength, deep meditation, and devotion. "A-dhika" means more. So "Radha" means the most beauty, the most

spiritual power, the most communions with God, as well as deep devotion. The Gopies and Radha Herself had been great sages in the past, who desired to get Krishna as God. The worshippers of Jagannath Temple think themselves to be Radha. For them, "not this, not this" or "nasti" which is the attitude of Netibada or nihilism is not present. Such persons tell that God is not small, not great, not tall, not white, or black, not having any shape at all or any symbol. All this felt to be not true. Rather Lord Jagannath is felt to be all this. In the half-formed black Murti of Jagannath, God is felt to be very much alive and aware. With His huge round eyes, called Chakadola, He sees everything, with His handless arms, He embraces all and does all. This same God, this same Jagannath is also ever present in every house of Puri. If a worshipper or devotee of His had hundred percent faiths, He will even manifest Himself in ordinary piece of stone, where no Puja has ever been done. His presence is felt to be all-pervading, in everything, and so all is to be worshipped as His form.

When a worshipper of Jagannath Temple is about to die, he has two last wishes, one is to taste Mahaprasad the holy food offered to Lord Jagannath, in his last hour. The second is to hear at that same time Bhagavata, where Radha's love for Krishna is described. Thus in his last moments, the form and the formless merge into one. Banamali, a famous Vaishnavite poet of Odisha, expresses it in this way.

*"Jagannath Yasoda nandana
Shreemati Chitta Chatak nutan Jaladhar
Laban Jaladhitata Niladree nama Prakat".*

Oh Jagannath,
Mother Yashoda's dear foster son,
Your Radha is like the Chataka bird,
Drinking only the pure rain drops
You shower as Your grace".



As stated at the beginning of this chapter, rituals are not at all necessary for a Vaishnavite. If the heart and mind are pure and one-pointed towards God, spontaneous devotion will flow. However, to help arouse such sublime feelings, rituals are performed. To purify the mind, the body, and the place, rituals are done daily in all temples and churches. In giving a garland to God, the heart becomes filled with joy and the disturbed mind becomes redirected.

The rituals of the great Jagannath Temple of Puri may appear complex and obscure at first glance, as in comparison with even those of the Catholic Church. Because of the long history associated with temple, tinges of Tantric Mother worship of Buddhism and Saivism can be found, in addition to pure Vaishnavism. It is said in Manu Sanhita,

"Jatha dehi, Tatha debe".

"What is true to man ?
Is true to God also".

Unlike the temples devoted to the Mother, where there is blood and animal sacrifice, and complicated Yantras to be followed exactly, or Shiva temples, which are dark places of austere meditation, Vishnu temples, such as the great Jagannath Temple of Puri, are felt to be the Lord's own earthly home. The powerful hand gestures performed during Puja and the Sanskrit Slokas recited must be memorized and understood, but their meaning is simple. They simply invite the Lord to come, to sit close, and take the food offered, and then to bless all present. They act as a powerful medium to draw God to us, to humanize Him, so we can feel him, feel His divine energy, talk with Him, and serve Him. Our minds, like the raw iron drawn to the pure magnet, are transformed by this association with him.

Secondly, even in daily life we have our little personal rituals to perform for ourselves, such

as washing, dressing, and putting scent and make up. But we never think of these as rituals. So too worshippers in Jagannath Temple give the deities daily bath, change their cloth, brush their teeth, feed them, and put them to bed at night. They never think these to be imposed rites, but the natural things to do for a loved one.

However, discipline in the Puja must be strictly followed. Each family of worshippers has the right to serve, but only to do the one duty given to him by hereditary tradition. The man who carries flowers to Jagannath offered by devotees cannot decorate him with them. This is the sole Seva of another family of worshippers. Why is this discipline imposed ? Perhaps the words of the great Vaishnavite saint Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu best express it,

"Only when man feels himself to be
Lower than a blade of grass
can then see the glory of God".

On Rath Yatra day, thousands of Sevakas must help to bring the deity of Lord Jagannath out of the temple to the awaiting cars, each one doing his allotted Seva only. One has the vision of a great black elephant being moved by thousands of tiny ants. By discipline and rituals, Ahamkara, the feeling of ego, is slowly eliminated. No one alone can carry Lord Jagannath, but only by all working together. The way of life in the temple must be like that of a very large family. Then it becomes a power-house of love and peace, and it blesses the whole world. Such is the grace of Lord Jagannath for the entire modern world whether one lives in Jagannath Puri itself, or in some far off region of the globe, if one lives under His influence, there is peace in one's home.

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Water Preservation and Expulsion of Lord Jagannath Temple

Dr. Ramakanta Kar

Shri Jagannath culture is a special culture not only in Orissa but in the world. So Shri Jagannath Temple can not be compared with other temples in India. As per the opinion of Indian History, in the pre-Christian period, Sanatana Dharma was the most important and non-indigenous religion of Orissa. Although it lost royal support in the 1st century A.D. Jainism, Buddhism, Christians, Muslims were separated from the Sanatan Dharma and the rest portion of the Sanatana Dharma, was named as Hindu Dharma. 'Hindu', this work is spostly mentioned in Sabda Kalpadruma, 1st century A.D. to 7th century A.D the Kalinga, the pre-name of Orissa became neglected. Firstly Darudevata was famous and worshipped by Brahmins and Tribals as Narayana. Then Shakta and Narashingha tatwa named as Devi-Narasingha tatwa was accepted in Orissa. Then Shaiva and Baishnava tatwa or Harihar tatwa was accepted. The period when the Shaktas gained their greatest influence and were most generously supported by the rulers of Orissa extended from the 8th to 11th centuries. Shaivism and Shaktatism rose to a prominent position. In this serial development of different Isms, the religious life of Orissa was dominated by the Tatwa of Purusottam or Jagannath (Madhava) ever since the famous and majestic present temple of God in Puri, was built in the 12th century A.D. by Ananta Varman Chodagangadeva(1078-1147 A.D.). The

construction of the temple perhaps began after the year 1135. Chodagangadeva united Kalinga with Utkal overthrowing the Somavansi dynasty of Utkal and shifted the capital from Kalinga Nagar to Chaudwar, Cuttack on the banks of the river Mahanadi. He started to build the present temple of Lord Jagannath as Purusottama temple in Puri which was to be more in height than any temple in Orissa known before. This construction could not be completed during the life time of Chodagangadeva. The next his successor Anangavimadev finished the works of the temple in 12th century A.D. Lord Purusottam was named as the Lord of the Universe, Shri Jagannath. The King Anangavimadev also was influenced by the Vishnuism as before Chodagangadeva. At that time Ramanuj Sampradaya was famous in preaching the Vishnuism.

The lower part of the temple was built by Chodagangadeva, supporter of Vishnuism and the construction of Sri Jagannath temple, therefore, marked a decisive change in the religious history of Orissa and a mark of Ramanuja Chita was fixed on the top of the forehead of the main temple. At last Krushna Tatwa entered into the temple and Madanmohana becomes the representative of Lord Jagannath in the 16th century A.D. at the time of Prataprudra Deva, the Gajapati of Orissa as he was influenced by the chanting of hymns in chorus or Uddanda Kirtana of Shri Chaitanya and he became a disciple of him. All the Sevakas of



the temple accepted the Vaishnaba Chita on their foreheads and closely familiar persons or Karanas taking Baishnava Dikshya became Vaishnavas as per the instruction of the king, Pratapuradev. This reference has been mostly dealt with in an article written by K.N. Mohapatra in 1954 and Sri K.C. Mishra in 1971.

Chodagangadeva at the time of building the lower part or the base of the temple, emphasized on the water preservation and drainage system for water expulsion. At the time of Shaivism and Shaktism the twin temple were made by Somavamshi Kings up to Jajati Keshrari (10 century A.D.) The temples of Astakila or Eight Shakti Temple and Eight Shiva Temples were mainly made before. Three Siva Temples inside the present temples of Lord Jagannath and five temples of Siva called as Panchapandava were outside surrounding the temple. These Eight Siva temples are Jameswara (Judhisthir), Lokanatha (Vhima), Markandeswara (Arjun), Kapalmochana (Nakul) and Nilakantheswara (Sahadev) near Indradyumna Tank including three temples inside the temple : Agniswara (near Rososala at lions gate), Pataleswara (at the north gate) and Ishaneswara (near Anadabazar or at the north gate). These temples are situated in the lower surface connecting the under ground water level. The king Chodagangadeva connected the Nalas with the water surface for expulsion connecting these temples and he built seven underground Sudangas to different sides of Puri Town.

1. From the temple to Chudanga Sahi established by the king.
2. From the temple to Bali Sahi (old king's palace).
3. From the temple to Chilika.
4. From Swetaganga (Bali Sahi) to Ganga (Calcutta).

5. From Puri to Chaudwar.
6. From old Raja Nahar to Swargadwar.
7. From Sri Jagannath Temple to Papa Nasana Tank, Bhubaneswar.

This information is collected from some legends and the Sudangas were seen at Chudanga Sahi at the time of digging the spot. The king and his family members were slipped off through these Sudangas for protection of their lives from the enemies. Now some Sudangas are mixed with Nalas and are being utilized for drainage of the polluted water from the temple.

For the preservation of water in the temple there are seven wells inside the temple. Two wells are being utilized in cooking work in the premises of Rosha Shala named as Ganga and Jamuna. Two wells inside the Koili Baikuntha, one is now under the ground unused and other in being utilized for watering the plants. One well in the premises of Upabana is being utilized is watering the flower plants of the Lord. A well near the temple of Vimala is being utilized specially at the time of Durgapuja and another important well named as Suna Kua (Golden well) is being utilized once in a year, situated in the premises of Sitala Temple at the North gate. One hundred eight pots of water are baled out and carried by the Sevakas for the bathing of the Lord at the Snan Vedi on Snana Purnima.

These renowned architectures of the king, Chodagangadeva are being utilized now in the temple of Lord Jagannath. The inner polluted waters are going out through the Nalas connected with water surface and out polluted waters are being expelled through the steps of four gates of the temple.

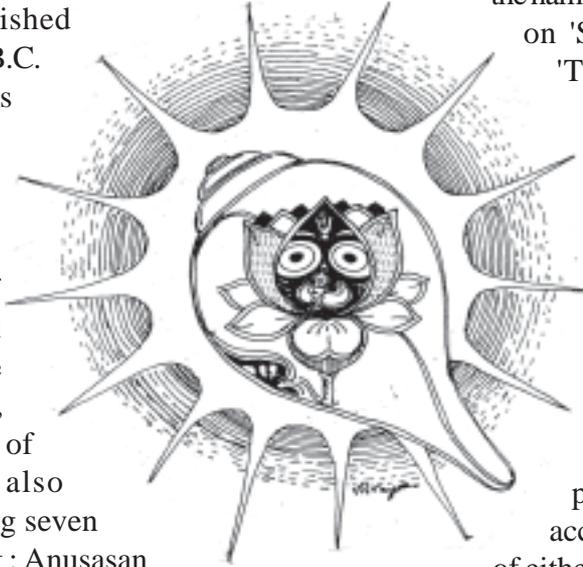
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Srikshetra in Kapila Samhita

Dr. Bhagyalipi Malla

Kapila Samhita is a Sanskrit creation. Kapila is known to have been the creator of this immortal work. Kapila is a familiar name so far the history and culture of Indian Philosophy is concerned. He is one of the six optimistic philosophers and propounded of 'Sankhya' philosophy. He flourished during 8th-5th Century B.C. and his wisdom has popularized him with that of divine power. In the Mahabharata of Vedavyasa he has been described as the son of Dakshya Prajapati and divine messangee as the son of Lord of himself, being the incarnation of Lord Vishnu, he is also identified as one among seven Nagarajas (Mahabharat : Anusasan Parva), father of Silihotra (Mahabharat : Shanti Parva), son of Visvamisra and also as the preacher of Pasupat Shiva cult. In fact, Kapila is an institution for his original 'Sankhya' philosophy. The philosophers of these institutions have identified themselves as the successors of Sankhya philosophy of Kapila Muni. Sometimes it has become problematic to identify Kapila as these



philosophers have left their versions in the original text.

The original Sanskrit Kapila Samhita in Orissa appears to have been written by one of the successors of Kapila. Because, mentioning the name of Kapila we find two works on 'Sankhya Prabachana' and 'Tattva Samsa' at present available. For this there is difference of opinion regarding nativity chronology of Kapila. Historians and archaeologist of Orissa like K.N. Mohapatra, K.C. Panigrahi, S.N. Rajguru etc. have discussed the matter extensively at different points of time. They have accepted him as the inhabitant of either Puri or Bhubaneswar and have assigned him to 16th Century A.D. Taking into account their observations his date may be assigned to 18th to 19th Century A.D. But some of the scholars also believed that Kapilesvara of Old Town, Bhubaneswar is the birth place of Kapila Muni of the Vedic period to whom the composition of original Kapila Samhita is credited to.



However, the creation have come to light because of the simplification of Veda, learned by hearing. The numbers of Upanisads have yet not been decided. In the opinion of Sankara it is ten in numbers. But actually we find more than two hundred such titles. In other words Samhita is the collection of Sangeeta Pradhan Mantras. In the mantras some specific Gods have been prayed. Therefore 'Samhita' can be described as the collection of prayers. They have been identified in to four categories in the line of Rigveda, Samveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda. In later days the meaning of Atharva veda has undergone great change. The words of Samhita have been incorporated in 'Dharmashastra, Karmakanda, Purana and History itself. For propagation of their philosophy and religion these pandits have used the words of Samhita. These ideas of Sanskrit verses have significantly influenced regional languages and they have used the word Samhita in their own works. The 'Sunya Samhita' of Achyutananda Das has extensively referred this.

There is difference of opinion as to the classification of 'Kapilasamhita'. Because it is rich with the style of Purana and Upanisads. Name of Kapila Samhita is not available in Astadasha Purana and Astadasha Upa-purana of Sanskrit literature. But Kapilasamhita has accepted as upa-purana (Sub-purana).

Again it has been said that Kapila Purana is a Sthulapurana. We can call it as a Sthala Mahatmya. In such works there is marked bias for place, time and its establishment and propagation. The composer of such kavyas have their inner motive in order to attract the people to their cult in the name of the Mahatmyas. For this the abode of Gods become the places of pilgrimage. Many Puranas and Mahatmyas have been written taking into account for the holy places like surface of earth, mountain, river, pond,

ocean and lake etc. with time (month & season). And the Kapilasamhita is full of such descriptions about places of pilgrimage.

There are twenty one chapters in Kapilasamhita. The entire treatise is written in conversational journalistic manner. Narayana has been invoked through the first invocatory verse of Bhagavata Mahapurana (Narayanam Namuskritya Naramschaiba Narottam, Devin Sarasvati Vyasam tatojayamudiriet) after invocation to Lord Ganesha as the God of knowledge. In 21st chapter there is description about Mahima or glory of Hari, Hara, Surya, Parvati etc. Guhyavidya depiction as described in the book, description before disbeliever of this philosophy, like that of donation to a good for nothing fellow. Under the above circumstances real devotees may be immensely benefited. Therefore it is said that the beginning and end of the chapter is said to be the copy of the writing style of Puranas.

The objective of this Samhita is to highlight the glory of Orissa's four holy places and to heighten the significance of Lords of various Kshetras. The poet has presented lively pictures of every Kshetras. There is no doubt that he has composed the work out of his direct experience at various Kshetras and he has analysed the popular legends and folk tales of the pilgrim centres. He has not given reference to the most important aspects of significance of Gods and Goddesses of pilgrim centres. He has attempted to justify that India is the holy country of the world, Utkal being the holiest, because it is the abode of Lord Vishnu, Shiva, Shakti and Surya.

In his opinion Puri is the Sriksheetra. It is the 'Sankhakshetra' and the pleasure land of Lord Vishnu. Lord Jagannatha is being worshipped at this place since the time of composition of Vedas. He is also identified as the Niladri Vihari. The



Indradyumna episode has been articulated in order to justify the emergence of Lord Vishnu in the form of Daruvigraha and to establish the fact that Srikshetra is the epitome of all Gods and Goddesses, all religions and cults, folk and folk art cultures of India with the description of trees, tanks, fairs and festivals, Parsva Devi and Devata etc. have been portrayed in this book with historicity.

'Shamba' the son of Lord Krishna was cured from leprosy by worshipping Sun God at Konarka for which the place is known as 'Arkakshetra'. There is reference about Ramachandi, Ramesvara temple, Suryaganga, Mahadhani, Chandrabhaga, Arkabata, Srisalmali bhanda, Vijayasaptami etc. in the book although there is less reference about the construction of sun temple at Konarka.

Biraja Kshetra of Jajpur is famous as one of the important Shakta centers of the state. In the Samhita, Birajakshetra has been described as being created by Lord Brahma and the Devi has been worshipped over here since the beginning of the Satyayuga. It is believed that, whatever blessings are available by worshipping Shiva at Kashi, is also available to the devotees by worshipping Maa Parvati at Jajpur. As per the Kshetra Varnana the Varaha, Akhandala, Muktesvara, Trilochanesvara, Adi Devata, Gaya Navi, Vaitarani, Kapila, Tirtha, Soma Tirtha Mrutyunjaya Tirtha, Kroda Tirtha, Sidhesvara Tirtha etc. have acquired the status of pilgrimage.

At the end of the Samhita the glory and the greatness of Ekamra Kshetra have been depicted

conspicuously. The Sisiresvara temple has also received equal amount of glory like that of Lingaraj temple in the Kapilasamhita while describing the Lingaraja Mahatmya. However Ekamra Kshetra has assumed special significance in comparison to other pilgrim centres. In his opinion it is one of the 'Lilabhumi' or pleasure garden of Kapilashvihari Shiva. He is the self created primordial diety. While describing some legends connected with this place he has also described about other Lingas like Vasudeva, Brahmhesvara, Sukhmesvara, Kapilesvara, Ramesvara, Muktesvara, Sidhesvara, Kedaresvara etc. and also described about the tanks, rivers, trees and fairs and festivals like Vindusagar, Kapilakunda, Papa Nasana Puskarini, Ashoka Jhara, Kedarakunda, Puspabhadhra, Dadhi Shraba, Prachi, Gandhavati river, Amulaka, Tiktasaka Briksha, Chaturmasya Vrata, Prathamastami, Yama Dwitiya etc.

While reading Kapilasamhita it becomes apparent that Orissa has been identified as the centre of various religious and social orders like Vaishnava, Shakta, Shaiva and Smarta. In fact it is found that the poet has tried to establish the importance and glory of his own state through his creations. Kapilasamhita is a strong medium to understand the antiquity and importance of India and Utkal.

Dr. Bhagyalipi Malla, is the Curator at Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar.





Soviet Scholar on Jagannath Cult

Pramod Chandra Pattnayak

There is no need to emphasize that the Lord Jagannath is the God of Universe, the name itself implies. To add to it, temples for this Great God may be found in every nook and corner of the country and even abroad. So one may not be surprised to find a Jagannath temple in London, New York, Moscow, or Tokyo.

Nevertheless more temples are always under construction at different places in the world in order to enshrine the trinity for their worship. This shows that the cult of Jagannath adores even the people of this modern age. The philosophy of Jaganath cult attracted the westerners too. As such one may find a lot of western disciples with the usual saffron clothings chanting "Hare krishna" Nama and dancing emotionally and with devotion.

Scholars interested in the cult of Jagannath, from time immemorial have worked on the philosophy, and have produced volumes and volumes of their research work. The philosophy also attracted foreign scholars thereby the

research works have been published not only in different Indian Languages but in a number of foreign languages too. One such scholar from the then USSR was interested in the cult of Jagannath and published her works under the title of "The Chariot of Jagannath". The name of the scholar is

Nina Rukavishmikova, a Journalist of Moscow. Since the theology was not given any importance in the new social order of the communism, Nina Rukavishmikova must be credited to have taken interest in such a study on cult of Jagannath.

Nina Rukavishmikova before venturing for her research on Lord Jagannath, had to undertake courses on different aspects of her research in three Universities. It is of

course usual that any Soviet Scholar interested on study of indology has to undertake such courses relating to their subject of research, in any Indian University or such other institutions of high standard before taking of the research. In addition, this scholar has to accommodate himself or herself in a dormitory or put up with any Indian family and travel widely in the country to gather





various aspects of indology and acclimatizing them with the Indian style of life and culture, food and drinks rites and rituals, tradition and festivals, so on and so forth. This facilitates the scholars to come in contact with people of various strata of the Indian societies. Thus this scholars get ample opportunities for better communication and interaction. This plays an important role for carrying out study on Indology as language does not become a bar.

Nina Rukavishmikova had undergone all these rigorous processes before taking up her research and had expressed immense pleasure saying that the experiences of her student life in India were not only fascinating but also valuable for her future life. Nina Rukavishmikova had to undergo a tough time to master the Oriya Language and she read a lot of Oriya books and journals of various classical and modern author of her time.

Incidentally, the book, "The Chariot of Jagannath" is the first Soviet Book devoted to Orissa. This is also the first book written by Nina Rukavishmikova and was published by Nauka Publishers of Moscow. Unfortunately in spite of my intense search in different library of the state and browsing in the internet the book could not be made available. However I had gone through the review of this book which was appropriately and profoundly looked into by L.Rozhansky. I feel fortunate to have access to this piece of work from a journal.

This book has been forwarded by Nikolai Roerich. Nina Rukavishmikara had collected a lot of materials during her course of study and gone deep through them. She summarized and compiled all of them in her book. The book

therefore may interest both reader for general information purposes and also who desires to go deep into the subject. For example, there is one chapter devoted to prominent public and political figure Gopabandhu Das. There is also a chapter on the art and architecture of local temples of the medieval period. This includes the descriptions of the methods of construction of the temples which have been illustrated amply with sketches and diagrams. These are highly technical and complicated in nature. The author has studied the theology of Oriyas and described in detail how the population is divided as Vaishnavite and Shaivite myths.

The caption of the book "The chariot of Jagannath" justifies as a number of chapters devoted to the temple like "Services in the Jagannath temple", "The feast of chariots", "Legends about Jagannath", besides the opinions of various important personalities concerned in the day to day activities, rites and rituals of the temple in general and the trinity in the cars in particular including the car festivals are incorporated.

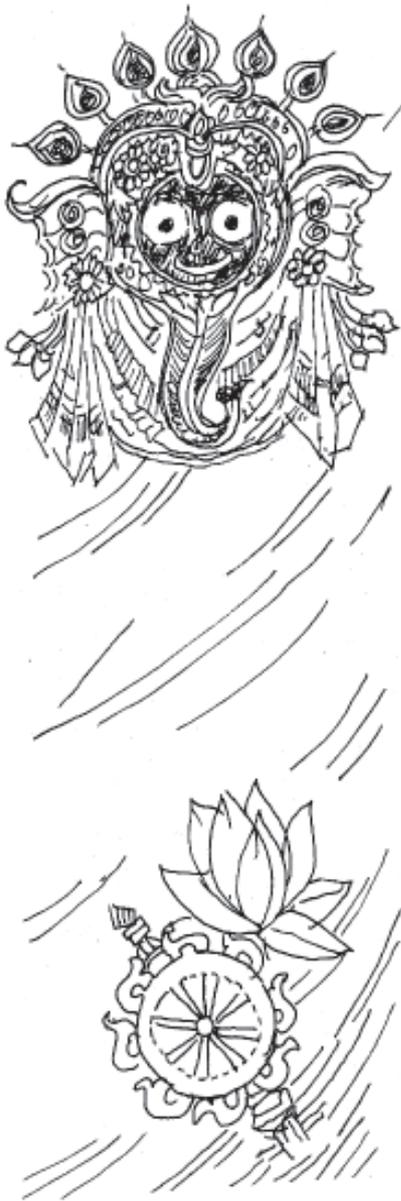
The reviewer also expresses his deep satisfactions on the chapter devoted on Orissa's political, social, economic, religious and cultural developments in historical chronology which are very interesting and fascinating. Such a book, if available should be a pride possession for common readers and persons interested in the study of Orissa and the revered God of Oriyas at least for the purpose of reference.

Pramod Chandra Pattnayak lives at 678-Laxmisagar, Bhubaneswar -6



Puri

*Written by - Sadasiba Mishra,
Translated by - Prasanna Mohanty*



'Shree Mandira' Where
From morning till midnight
For worshippers, opens
Smearing sand of 'Bada Danda'
All over the body, where, by love,
Worshippers overwhelmed
'Patitapabana Bana' where flies
For salvation of Sinners.

'Nandighosa' with Lord Jagannath
Where pays a sacred visit,
in a year, to worshippers
That holy Puri
Is my loving place
Like Puri there is no place
Anywhere else.

Puri is crowded
With Odisi Dance, Odisi Song
Sahijata, Pangata and Badikhela
Always with splendour
Life becomes clear
With a piece of 'Nirmalya'
In the mouth, from 'Anand Bazar'
No difference between
the rich and the poor
No casteism exists there
In the world
Puri is Heaven
The stream flows
With love of Brethren.



Prasanna Mohanty lives at Sagadia Sahi, Puri - 752001.



Are you that You are !!

Er. Raghunath Patra

Are you that you are ! Baman, the dwarf !
 Played tricks with Bali, the King
 Pushed him to nether world in trice
 Scarlet lotus-foot, pressing ?

Are you oh Lord Parasuram !
 Killed villain Kings of this world
 Once Oh not, twenty one times
 Few left alive for your grace, Oh Lord !

Are you Oh Lord Rama ?
 Lotus-eyed, moss green colour
 Went to woods for father's oath
 In guise of saint, without demur !

Captivated Rishis with graceful look
 Killed Ravan, the demon-king
 Exiled beloved wife in woods
 To make the subjects, rejoicing !

Are you Oh Lord Krishna ?
 Yashoda's fondled one, looking azure
 Killed Putana, Baka, Sakata demons
 During childhood without fear !

With frolic pastimes at Yamuna- bank
 Peacock-plumage on head
 With Champak blossomed beloved Radha
 Under blooming Kadamba-shade !

Are you Oh Lord ! King of Dwaraka ?
 Took fried broken rice from Sudama, pauper
 And pot-herb of Bidur and cheered
 Saved Draupadi from nudeness fear !

Oh the Charioteer of Arjun-Car !
 Cleaned invitee's feet at sacrificial place

Protector of Pandavas, the affected ones
 Really I praise your groundless grace.

Are you Oh Lord ! Buddhadev ?
 Son of Mayabati and Sudhodan,
 The royal blood of Kapil Vastu
 Loved all without discrimination !

Your tender heart dissolved to look
 The gangrene of leaving creatures,
 Spread truth and amity, Oh Lord !
 How compassionate, how gracious !

Would you be Oh Lord ! Kalki Avatar ?
 Kill all wicked and dishonest ones
 With your wickedly sharpened sword
 Redress burden of earth-mother, hence !

Oh the paramount Incarnator ?
 To all incarnations, you give birth !
 Direct them to perform celestial pastimes
 Play rolls of both, Oh Jagannath ?

You are ocean, You are river !
 Really you are mysterious !
 Beginning of the beginning, end of the end
 Unique, unparallel, Lord of Universe !

Are you cherished son of this poet ?
 Who fondles daily in temple, Oh Lord !
 Devotee's passion makes you finite
 Oh ! Infinite, boundless God !!

Er. Raghunath Patra lives at Brundaban Dham, Lokanath
 Road, Puri - 752001.



Mania Das, The Great Devotee of Lord Jagannath

Somanath Jena



A house holder named Mania Das, was living in Srikhetra Puri many years ago. He had a family consisting of wife and others. He used to maintain himself and his family by selling malas or garlands of flowers and Tulasi (basil leaves) and providing regularly to the deities in the Temple of Lord Jagannath. As ill luck would have it, except him all his family members died. He realized the illusory world and was quite convinced that nothing in this world is permanent and everybody is mortal. All have to be separated from each other one day. He could see that his own wife and his own son died in his very sight and got separated from him in no time. He developed dispassion and through discrimination, he could become firm that the name of Lord is only true, which can save him and release him from world bondage and Cycle of Birth and Death. All other matters are unreal. This realization made him to take shelter under a Guru of Vaisnava faith and get himself initiated to Vaisnavism and became a staunch Vaisnab.

Daily he used to put on only a Kaupin tied with a rope around his waist and used to make

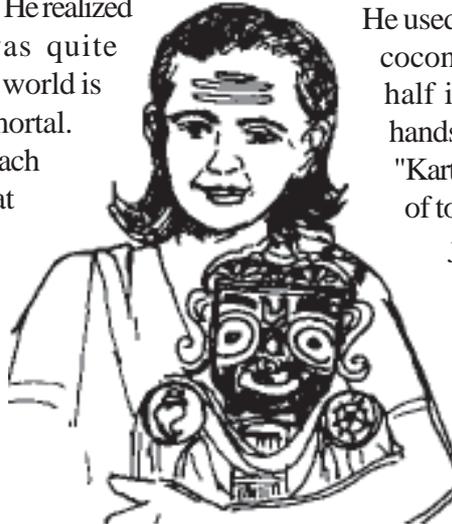
Bhajan, chanting, the names of Sri Hari with much devotional feeling.

In the early morning, he used to leave his bed, take his bath in Mahodadhi in the sacred sea water near Puri in Brahmamuhurta and he put on marks of twelve Tilaks on his forehead and a garland of Tulasi around his neck.

He used to hold one half of the fully dried coconut shell in one hand and another half in other hand and clapped both hands together frequently to resound as "Kartal" and holding tightly by one piece of torn loin cloth in between shoulder joint and chest. He was daily singing in Badadanda while moving in hot haste towards Srimandira. His eyes used to meet Patitapaban (The Saviour of Downtrodden) in front of Lions Gate (Singhadwar). He used to dance there out of

emotion and devotion from the depth of his heart and sing devotional songs and prostrates again and again by falling on the ground and sleeping on the Badadanda out of devotional stance and ecstasy.

After doing this for a long time, he used to come inside of Sri Jagamohan of Sri Mandir, stand behind the Garuda stambha, and look at Lord





Jagannath from there, then fall prostrate on the ground, and make Dandabata to and Sastanga Pranam to Lord. Then he used to get up, raise two of his hands and then put on his face thinking himself quite purified by looking at the Lord. He used to see Srimukha of the Lord and dance, chant after making sound by hitting the dry coconut shells holding in his two hands. In this way, while dancing, he used to look towards Argali, the path leading to Ratnasinghasan, where Mahaprabhu is seated. He was dancing backward and forward while singing in between Garuda Stambha and Aragali in Jagamohan. In that position he used to keep his hands upraised, while reciting hymns in praise of Lord shouting aloud. Sometimes, he used to come to the place in Jagamohan. The Pandas, known as Puranapandas used to sit and read Puranas like Vishnupurana and other Brahmins, devotees, sit by surrounding them and listen to recitation and discourse on Puranas. By the dance of Mania Das in such a emotional way their reading and discourse were disturbed. Even Mania Das used to come to their proximity quite to touch the sacred Puran. This is taken as offence like Namaparadha and it became intolerable for Pandas to see Mania Das dancing half-naked upraising his hands and lifting his legs above, and touching the sacred Bishnu Purana. They became infuriated and abused Mania Das, threatened him not to do so while recitation of Purana was going on. They asked him to listen to the Purana. Mania Das being offended left the Jagamohan without dancing. He remained outside. He did not took the Mahaprasad. It hurt Lord Jagannath. In dream, everything that happened to Mania Das, was conveyed to the Gajapati king, the Thakur

Maharaja. Lord asked the king to proceed to console Mania Das, beg excuse, offer cloth, take him inside temple by holding his hands, feed him Mahaprasad and allowed him to dance in Jagamohan to please the Lord. The same night, Lord Jagannath met Mania Das with Mahaprasad in hands and revealed His identity to Mania Das who was overwhelmed by the appearance of Lord before him and he partook the Mahaprasad. Next day, the king himself came on horse back and met Mania Das outside the temple, lifted him from his sleep from the ground, embraced him and held his two hands, led him to the Jagamohan, offered a cloth on his head and proclaimed that Mania Das would dance here as usual. No citation of Purana would be there. Puranapath will be done in the Jagamohan of the Mahalaxmi temple. In the Jagamohan of Lord Jagannath in between the Garuda Stamba and Aragali in front of Lords seated in Ratnasinghasan, devotees will be allowed to do Kirtan, sing hymns, prayers, clap hands, sing glory of Lord with musical instruments etc. to dance prostrate and offer devotion. Till date this tradition continues.

Lord Himself proved that thoughtful Bhajan and staunch Bhakti is needed for Him. He can not tolerate the offence to his devotees. In this age Bhajan of Hari should be only ritual to release the human being from the worldly bondage. Suka patha (loud recitation Puran like a Suka, Parrot without understanding the meaning of Bhava and inner devotion without putting into practice the messages of the Purana will not be effective remedy to purify heart and attain God realization. This is an authentic story from Sri Dardhyata Bhakti, written in Oriya by Rama Das.





Daily Rituals of Lord Jagannath



Bhagaban Mahapatra

The daily rituals of Lord Jagannath performed in the temple are popularly known as nitis, which signifies a particular religious rite. The religious rites are performed by the particular sevakas. For the performance of various rituals in the temple, a large number of sevakas use to extend their services on hereditary basis. The nitis start functioning daily from 5 AM in the morning to 12 in the mid night. Everyday rituals reflects the life style of God which closely characterizes human attributes; that is the rituals of bathing, brushing of teeth, dressing up, taking of food at certain intervals and at night (pahuda niti) to take rest etc. It is believed that this system has been in force from 13th Century A.D. when Ganga king Anangabhima Dev was the ruler of Orissa. He had completed the construction the present temple, installed the deities, introduced the daily rituals, appointed different sevakas to perform these rituals. These sevakas are not remunerated on monthly basis for their duties but they are entitled to receive a portion of Kotha-bhog daily which is known as khei. As per R.O.R.(record of rights) of the temple prepared in 1952, about 119 categories of sevakas perform the daily rituals of Lord. Gajapati Maharaja of Puri is regarded as first sevak(Adya sevak) of Lord. Some sevakas are presently paid daily according to a prescribed scale fixed by the Managing Committee of the temple which is known as puraskar. There is a provision of special puraskar

by the temple administration during car festival to most of sevakas for their satisfactory performance of seva.

In Sri Jagannath temple the timing and methods of rituals which are performed on daily basis are given below :-

Dwaraphita and Mangal Alati (5 AM)

Dwaraphita means opening of the entrance door of Garbhagriha of the temple at 5 AM. Presence of five servitors (Bhitarachhu Mohapatra, Muduli, Pratihari, Akhaanda Mekap and Palia Mekap) are essential for performance of Dwarapitha rite. Their duty is to examine the seal on pad locks that has been placed in the last night at the time of Pahuda niti.

After Dwaraphita niti, Mangal Alati i.e. offering of sacred lamps to deities starts by Bhitarachhu Mohapatra and two other Pushpalak sevakas standing below the Ratnavedi.

Mailam (6 AM)

After offering of sacred lamp i.e. Mangal Alati, Mailam niti starts. Mailam means change of dress used by God in night. The sevakas engaged for this niti are Pushpalaks (three persons; Khuntia, Changada Mekapa and Dhoba (washer-man)). After removal of night dress, the deities wear another set of dress called Tadap and Uttariyas for taking bath in the morning. Everyday deities wear clean and washed clothes



which are washed by Dhoba sevak who is a Brahmin by caste.

Abakash (6 AM- 6.30 AM)

Abakash means brushing of teeth and bathing of deities. This nitis are performed by servitors like Pushpalak, Suarbadu, Paniapat, Mukhapakhal sevak, Khuntia, Darpania, Pratihari, Amla Ghatuary, Bhandar Mekap, Mahabhoi and Khurinayak. Three Pushpalaks perform this bathing niti on three brass mirror kept in front of deities, sprinkle water mixed with camphor, curd, amla and sandal paste wood. Before this niti, they also perform both brushing and scrapping tongue of deities through the brass mirror stand on which the image of deities reflect. During this niti, the astrologer of the temple (Jyotish) reads out the tithi and other astrological information of the day.

Besa Mailam (6.45 AM)

In this niti, the deities change their cloths (tadap and uttariya) and wear another set of clean dress. The servitors associated with this niti are Pushpalak, Changada Mekap, Suarbadu and Dhoba etc. From the dress of deities one can understand the day of the week. It means for seven days of the week, the deities are dressed with seven different colours. For Sunday, deities wear red coloured Patta, for Monday black and white colour, for Tuesday Barapatia Patta, for Wednesday Patta of blue colour, for Thursday Patta of yellow colour, for Friday Patta of white colour and for Saturday Patta of black colour.

Sahanamela (7 AM to 8 AM)

Sahanamela, a local term which means public are allowed to have a close and free darshan of deities in Garbhagriha near the Ratna Vedi. This opportunity normally comes once in a day and on some specific festive days twice in a day i.e. after Sandhya Alati. During Sahanamela devotees are not allowed to touch the deities. The Sahanamela niti continues for one hour. For this

purpose sevakas such as Pushpalak, Khuntia, Mekap, Tadaukaran, Gochhikar, Pratihari, Suarbadu and some temple police personnel remain alert. Sometimes depending on volume of gathering Sahanamela Darshan continues to one hour more.

Besha Ulagi

Besh Ulagi means change of dress. After Sahanamela niti, besha ulagi niti starts between 8 AM to 8.30 AM in the morning. During this niti the deities are dressed with the specific colour of the day and gold ornaments studded with precious stones. Besides, the deities are decorated with scented flower ornaments i.e. Guna, Jhumpa, Adharamala and Tulasi garland.

Rosa Homa

The scheduled time for this niti is normally to start at 8.30 AM. Rosa Home means oblation to the fire in the kitchen of Lord. After this niti, the fire is used in the hearths of kitchen of Lord. Performance of this niti is the duty of temple Purohit, a Brahmin, but Pujapanda sevakas are presently doing this niti. Generally Rosa Home and Besa Ulagi nitis are performed at one time. It is a matter of surprise that the kitchen of Lord is such that in a very short time food for ten thousand people can be prepared and even on specific festive day lakhs of people get the opportunity to take Mahaprasad from the temple. It is therefore a rarest place in the world.

Surya Puja

Surya Puja means worship to Sun God which is performed near Muktimandap inside the temple. For this niti Pujapanda, Suarbadu, Patribadu, Garabadu and Ghatuari servitors remain present.

Dwarapala Puja

Dwarapala Puja means worship to the gatekeepers of Lord. They are Jaya and Bijaya. This puja is performed by a Pujapanda sevak near



Natamandap of the temple. This indicates Lord Jagannaths' greatness. He offers food first to his gatekeeper before he takes.

Gopala Ballav Bhoga

This indicates the breakfast niti of Lord. The scheduled time for this niti is about 9 AM. in the morning. Gopala ballav bhoga consists of Khai, Kora, Khua laddu, fruits ripe banana etc. After the puja, the deities are offered pana (betel) which is Lords favorite. Three pujapandas perform this niti.

Sakal Dhupa (Morning Meal)

The word Dhupa means offering of bhoga to deities. The prescribed time for Sakal Dhupa is about 10 AM morning. The sakal dhupa is commonly known as Kotha Bhoga or Raja Bhoga. Earlier Gajapati Maharaja of Puri was the Superintendent of the temple and he used to bear the entire cost of this morning meal of Lord. At present the cost is born by the temple administration as the management of the temple has been taken over by the Government of Orissa. Three Pujapandas perform this puja in the garbhagriha sitting on Ratnavedi. Supakaras known as Suar who used to cook the food carry the same in kudua (earthen pot) to the garbhagriha for the purpose of puja. After the puja, alati is offered to deities by the Pujapanda.

After alati, a certain portion of Prasad is taken to the temple of mother Bimala where it is reoffered to Goddess Bimala and thereafter it becomes Mahaprasad. The glories of Mahaprasad have been described in Padma Puran. The sakal dhupa consists of Kanika(sweet rice) khechudi, Dal, vegetable curries, fried vegetables etc. Besides various types of cakes (pitha) like Kanti, Mathapuli, Hansapuli and jhili etc are offered to the deities.

Mailama

After Sakal dhupa, the deities change their dresses, which are known as Mailam. After this niti, Bhoga Mandap niti starts.

Bhoga Mandap Bhoga

The prescribed time for this niti is about 11 AM. A large quantity of bhoga such as rice, dal, vegetable curry of different types, cakes of different kinds are offered to the deities in a big hall known as Bhoga Mandap Griha at the back side of Garuda Stambha in Natamandira of the temple. This bhoga is prepared by the Suaras on commercial basis to provide large quantity of food to the public. The temple administration does not bear any cost for this bhoga. Three Pujapandas perform this puja in Bhogamandap Griha. On certain festive occasion and depending on high demand of bhoga, bhogamandap bhoga may be performed two to three times a day after Dwiprahara dhuapa (mid-day meal).

Dwiprahara Dhupa (mid-day meal)

The time for this dhupa is prescribed at 1 PM. This niti is performed in the same manner as in Sakal dhupa. Three Pujapandas perform this puja in Garbhagriha with same categories of food arranged in Sakal dhupa. After puja, alati is offered to deities and certain portion of food is re-offered to mother Bimala. Varieties of cakes are offered to deities.

Madhyan Pahuda(mid-day rest)

If nitis are performed in time and time permits, the deities retire between 1.30 PM and 2 PM. During this time, Jaya Bijaya dwar and Beheran dwar (south gate facing to Muktimandap) remain closed.

Sandhya Alati (Evening lamp offering)

If there is Madhyan Pahuda, after opening of doors, the deities change their dresses. This niti is performed by Taluchha and Palia Pushpalak. If there is no Madhyan Pahuda, then after Madhyan dhupa and change of dress, sandhya alati niti is performed. In this niti, the deities are decorated with large quantity of scented and favourite flowers along with Tulasi. This sight is really unforgettable one.



Sandhya Dhupa (Evening meal)

The prescribed time for this niti is about 8 PM. This puja is performed by Pujapandas in same manner as in sakal and madhyanna dhupa. Items of food offered to deities are Subas Pakhal (water mixed rice) and pitha (cakes) like Mahapuli, Takua, Bhogapitha, Kakara, Chadheineda, and Amalu. After puja, alati is offered.

Mailam and Chandanalagi

If time permits sometimes Sahanamela (public darshan) is allowed free of cost to the public for going to Garbhagriha. If there is no Sahanamela, then mailam i.e. change of dress and Chandanalagi niti means sandal wood paste mixed with camphor, kasturi and kesar is applied on the body of deities. This niti is performed by the Pushpalak sevak assisted with Suarbadu, Ghatuari, Muduli, Palia Mekap, Garabadu and Hadap Naik and Palia Khuntia, Palia Padhiari.

Badasinghara Besa

After Chandanalagi, the deities are dressed up again which is known as Badasinghar Besa. It is the last besa niti of deities and with this besa deities retire in bed for the night. In this besa the deities put on Barulagi patta on which his most favourite song Gitagovinda verse is woven. The deities are decorated with scented flowers ornament like Chandrika, Padak Tilak, Jhumpa and Chausara. Really this besa is very very beautiful and at this moment the environment is such that one can not remove his sight and like to gaze till end of the besa. The deities look so nice and magnificent that cannot be expressed in words.

Badasinghar Dhupa

After besa, Badasinghar Dhupa starts at about 11 PM at night. The items of food offered to deities are Pakhal, Kanji and Kadalibhaja. The puja is performed by the Pujapandas in the Garbhagriha on the basis of Pancha Upachar Puja which takes a little time to over. After puja, Alati is offered by Pujapandas.

Khata Sejulagi and Pahuda

This is the last niti of the day and the time is around 12 mid-night provided nitis are performed in time. The arranged bed and bed sheets of the deities are taken to Garbhagriha. Then the Sayan Thakur is brought from the Bhandar ghara and at Jaya Bijay Dwar a niti is performed in which Paida (green coconut) is offered to deities along with pana (betel nuts). There after alati is offered. The Sayan Thakur is then taken to Ratnavedi and placed near Lord Jagannath. During this niti, Bada Chhata Math performs kirtan and bhajan, the essence of which is to please the deities at the time of retiring to bed. After this the deities retire to bed, lamps are made off and the Kalahat dwar, Jaya Bijaya dwar and Beheran dwar are sealed by the sevak Taluchha Mahapatra. Then all visitors and sevakas are allowed to vacate the temple premises. Some special temple police men remain inside the temple to make watch and ward at night.

In addition to above daily prescribed nitis, there are some other nitis which are special in character such as: Ekanta niti on Thursday, Nakhetra Bandapan, Ekadasi niti, Amabasya niti, Sagar Bije, Banaka lagi, Solar and Lunar eclipse niti and Mahasnan niti are also performed in the temple.

In fact, although prescribed time for each niti has been fixed, it is not correctly adhered to for which delay occurs in performing the nities. Further nities are so corelated that unless earlier one is completed next one cannot be performed. It is traditionally fixed. As particular servitors' attendance is necessary for particular niti, sometimes punctuality is not correctly adhered to by the sevaks in the temple, for which daily rituals of deities are delayed.

Bhagaban Mahapatra lives at Sarbodaya Nagar, Sri Gundicha Vihar, Puri-752002.



Sri Jagannath -The Mysterious, Romantic and Lovable Lord

Dr Chinmayee Satpathy

Jagannath is called the ninth incarnation of Lord Bishnu among Dasavataras. Though the cult has been treated as sectarian by many religious exponents, various composite cultures have been incorporated into the cult to make it a grand cultural platform. Jagannath consciousness is unique and exceptional kind of sensation which can be hardly expressed in sheer words and language. The feeling of oneness and sameness, within and beyond, exclusive and all inclusive is central to Jagannath consciousness. This fact can not be easily explicable to ordinary human intellect which remain still mysterious but interesting. Within this worldly existence, man hardly ever tries to explore the inward involution where he could barely able to uncover the sole existence of Brahma, the ultimate truth within. Brahma is beyond all comprehension and confinement. In order to deeply understand the mystery of worldly creations, Jagannath cult provides all kinds of



insights and inspirations. He is the supreme Lord, the absolute and infinite. When human being strives to explore Brahma, he gradually moves within from a definite shape (Saguna Brahma) to an infinite form (Nirguna Brahma) where the realization of self or Atmadarshan comes which is central to Sanatana Dharma.

The Gitagovinda written by the famous poet Jayadev is recited everyday in the temple of Lord Jagannath. With all devotion and loyalty the poem illustrates the ardent and eternal love of Radha and Krishna with elegance, expresses the highest range of perfection, the brightest example of love where there is complete union of

mind and soul. It has become a perennial source of inspiration, joy and happiness. It is believed that even the Lord Jagannath himself gets attracted where there is recitation of the verses of Gitagovinda. The lyrics of the music have amazing and captivating effects due to its sweet musical blending, softness of words having high intrinsic



value, finest artistic expressions which made it universal in its appeal.

"Dehi pada pallavamudaram" is the most humble and fervent appeal of love of Lord Sri Krishna towards his beloved Sri Radha which means asking Sri Radha to place her feet on his heart. It expresses the overwhelming consciousness, kindness and benevolence, sweetness and compassion which envelope the entire universe where the Vedas have also been subsumed. Here, Sri Krishna become so intimately human in character where complete surrender to his beloved illustrates the finest expression of his eternal love and adoration. The fine lyrics is composed in such a sequence which made the entire composition more enchanting and delightful. It clearly depicts when a true devotee becomes a true lover, he find himself completely exposed, sensualist in bare soul, emotionally plagued for his Lord. The most potent of all emotional impulses flourish when emotion transformed into devotion to full extent. In appreciation to these eternal intrinsic qualities, the collective appeal Gitagovinda defines the true essence of perpetual love of Radha Krishna in the form of finest lyrics encompassing all shades of passions and attractions from physical to ecstatically sublime. The dancing of Devadasi with the recitation of Gitagovinda inside the temple of Lord Jagannath is one of the rarest but interesting aspects of Jagannath cult.

OM the adi-akshyara or pranabakshyara, the adi-mantra, is the most elemental to the origin of universe. Constituting of three letters O U M defines tri Brahma, where Devi Subhadra symbolically represents Brahma the Lord of creation, Lord Jagannath the incarnation of Bishnu the lord of nurturing and Balabhadra represents the Bhairava or Siva the Lord of destruction.

Absolute humanization of the cult made it more distinctive and significant than any other cults in the world. It crosses all barriers of caste, creed and sect and become universally acceptable and highly appreciable not only among Hindus but also among Jainas, Shikhs and Buddhists. Within the lofty materialistic aspirations, latent desires confines every human beings out of which they can hardly come out and recognize their own potentials within the short life span.

Lord Jagannath rules us like an emperor, protects us from all devil forces like a kin and loves all the devotees like a sensible lover, where the Lord and the disciples become one and inseparable. His pleasing features, round eyes attract many devotees from far of places all around the world. Jagannath is called Darubrahma which illustrates the fundamental philosophy of human life that defines body is perishable but soul (atma) is imperishable and indestructible. Navakalevara of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra takes place once in twelve years which signifies this mortal principle. It has also been clearly illustrated in Bhagbat Gita that "Banasani Jirmani Yatha Bihaya, Nabani Gruhanti Naroparani, Tatha Sarirani Bihaya Jirna, Nyanyani Sanjati Nabani Dehi." which means as the man wear new clothes leaving the old one, so also the soul leaves the body and resides in another body when the man dies.

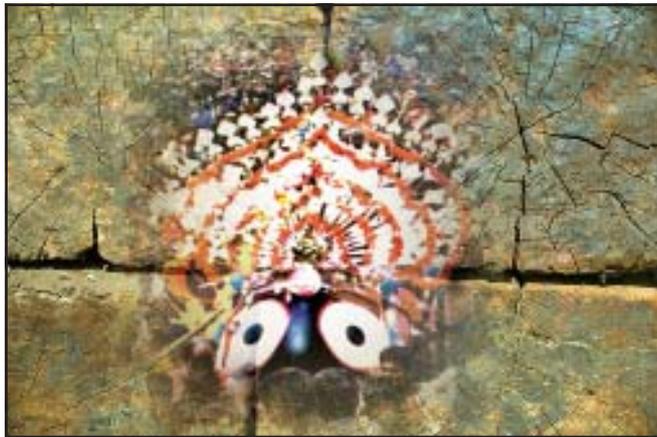
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Shree Jagannath Cult and Puri

Damodar Padhy

Puri being a coastal district of Orissa, is famous for its historic antiquities, religious sanctuaries, architectural grandeur, sea-scape beauty and moderate climate. It holds a wealth of attraction for the visitors. It boasts of a continuous history from the 3rd Century B.C to the present day and its unique monuments like those of Lord Jagannath at Puri, the Sun God at Konark are the famous in the world. It has the Chilika Lake, one of the largest brackish water lakes in India, that holds a picturesque sea-scape beauty. It offers an ideal resort for birds who migrate from different parts of the continent. By virtue of geographical location, the climate of Puri is equable through- out the year.



Puri the abode of Vishnu as Jagannath which contributed the word "Juggernaut" to the English language, represents its Integrated Individuality as its cultural heritage, a unique blend of claims of time and eternity with a power answerable only to wisdom. Puri's compendious

heritage has been representing that spark of immortality that the Oriyas and the Indians have won against the powers of negation, through a sprit of university, adaptability, and an astute mixture of the present which no other culture can aspire to explain as its self justification. The name of the Lord as Purusottama (perfection personified) or as Jagannath (Lord of Universe) represents a universality in true with the familiar fraternity of mankind (Vasudheiva Kutumbakam). Adi Shankaracharya visited Puri, set up the Gobardhan Matha (monastery) as the exception from his other three mathas as a Vaishnavite, defined Jagannath as the Supreme one. It is thus not only one of the four Dhams (Holy Places) for Hindus but the most pious and sacred place.

Various sectarian heads visited Puri on pilgrimage, setup their own monasteries for continued serve to Lord Jagannath and returned.

Spiritually mollified - The list includes Kabir and the "Torani" of Kabirchaura Nayak the



founder of Shikhism, visited Puri and gained entrance into the temple by performing a miraculous feat of showing the trinity reflected on his palms. He setup the Bauli and Mangi Maths which still attract the Shikhs from the worldover. Sankar Deva of Assam had followed the same path. Other religious heads and dignifiers like Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Rai Ramananda, Jayadeva, Gorakhanath, the father of Nath cult of religious iconoclasm visited Puri. Saint Totapuri a vedant teacher of Ramakrishna has also visited Puri. Bhakti Krishnatirtha and Muquaddam Jahanies visited Puri. The latters synthesized "Pir" concept at Konark bears testimony. Sridhar Swami, Sadhu Sundar Das visited Puri for fulfillment of their spiritual craze.

The Quintessential characteristic of its culture and philosophy has made it from Pan-Indian to Pan-Continental. The Car-Festival of Shri Lord Jagannath now not limited to Puri or Orissa rather it is celebrated in global scale, the reverberation echos of which are heard from Los Angeles to Piccadily from Heidelberg to Tokyo.

The Jagannath culture is not only pre-dominated in Puri but it is global. Its Universal affirmation is secular defusion of such an attitude is futuristic. It calls for unity in diversity is an age of diverse perversity. The consecration of all the empires by Gajapati of Puri, Kapilendra Deva to Lord Jagannath, the Lord emerging as "istadeva" and "Rastradevata" and rolled down the centuries as the crest of nationalism which found (Madhusudan Das) the eminent barrister of British era) in 1928 to cry out 'serve us' Lord Jagannath'. The dazzle of Kohi-noor, originally gifted to Lord Jagannath, the Hum of devotional "Janana" (non-bhajan), the cries of Chandan Hajuri (the chief warrior of Maharani Laxmibai) and 'the Mahaprasad brotherhood' have been unifying forces and symbols of national unity.

The evolution of Odissi Dance and music out of the Devadasi institution still enchants all with its mystic rhythm. The Orissan school of architecture emerging from here is a poetry frozen in stone. The Patta-paintings and appliqué work are a craze in the west, particularly in U.S.A of today. The Shell-craft have a major appeal.

It is thus here at Puri that the pattern of a Pan-Indian, (nay, global) culture of tomorrow is on the anvil. People are individual atoms ever contributing their properties to the "matter" of Jagannath Dharm without consciousness of mutual distinctions. Puri belongs to humanity, the seat of an eternal education, the bridge that gulfs the past and the future and the blending of diverse impulses for a single embodiment in the march of all fulfilling time.

Temples and sanctuaries, beaches and glorious lakes, colorful, vibrant and the numerous festivals for every reason and for every season that can take on a "Jagannath-like momentum".

Puri has then all and much more for all. Excellently connected by air, rail and road, Puri invites you to its hospitable environs and promises you an experience you will never forget. When others talk of taking you down memory lane.

Puri will take you back to your ancient linkages. When others talk of romancing with the stones, her ancient architects and sculptors will show you what it really means.

Visit Puri, rediscover the three R's i.e Rest, Relax, Recall and write your travel diary better than your friend. She's been waiting for you for centuries.

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Sri Jagannath - Ultimate Abode of Jiva

Sibasundar Pattanaik

We see a great temple touching the sky. It is the temple of Lord Jagannath, the Lord of Universe. On the top of the temple Sri Sudarsan Chakra, the weapon of Lord Jagannath exists. On the outer walls of the said temple three Abatars (incarnations) of Bhagaban (the Supreme God) exist, such as Sri Baman Deva on the southern wall, Sri Nrushingha Deva on the western wall and Sri Baraha Deva on the northern wall. Whatever temples of Bhagaban exist such as the temples of Sri Rama, Sri Krushna, Sri Baraha, Sri Nrushingha etc. on the said temples these statues of these incarnations of God as Parso Debatas (side deities) exist on similar sides. These side deities and the symbolic weapon establish the facts that this is the temple of Bhagaban .

The temple of Lord Jagannath exists on the hill top of Neelagiri . Therefore this Dham or Sacred place is said as Sri Neelachala Dham. Some people also say this place as Martya Baikuntha (The sacred abode of Bhagaban on the Earth). This is comparable with Sri Golak Dham (The Original sacred abode of Bhagaban). All our scriptures prove that the Supreme God resides in Sri Golak Dham. Some say that Sri Neelachala Dham is actually Sri Golak Dham. Sri Laxmi Thakurani also resides in this abode to tell Sri Jagannath the sorrow and difficulties of Bhaktas and to give them reliefs and to motivate them to be Bhaktas. Here exists Kalpa Bata the Banyan tree to fulfill the desire.

One should not directly seek relief from the Lord; he is to request Maa Laxmi sitting on the Ratna Simhasan near His feet to get the said desire fulfilled by the Lord. One who seeks for happiness

he can get it. But he would be fallen on the cycle of birth, old age and death and would suffer. If one seeks for Sajujya Mukti (Salvation of similar person) or Salokya Mukti (Salvation for heavenly abode) those can be attained. According to gravity of human's desire Sri Jagannath would hear so soon. He heard the cry for help of Draupadi when Dusasan was making her naked in Kurusava and the Lord gave her cloths to save her modesty. He had also saved Ajamila from the clutches of the Jama Duttas after hearing His name once.

Another example is given here how Sri Jagannath is "Param Brahma". There exists a passage temple in front of "Baisi Pabachha" (Twenty -Two steps in Sri Mandir). On the front side of it the statues of Sri Brahma and Sri Siva exist who are paying their respect to the Bhaktas on folded hands and tell them to go inside and see the Lord Golak Pati Sri Jagannath and get relief from sins and get salvation in Sri Neelachala Dham. These two statues reveal that Sri Jagannath is superior to Sri Brahma and Sri Siva and Sri Jagannath Himself is Bhagaban. Maa Laxmi, Kalpa Bata and Rohini Kunda are there in this Dham.

Since the middle age from the time of Pancha Sakhas (Five devotional friends) and subsequent Baishnab literature it has been established that as Bhagaban uses to take incarnation from Sri Golak Dham by descending upon the Earth in different Juga (age) and performs His lila, similarly Sri Jagannath takes different incarnations from Sri Neelachala Dham and performs His lila. For example Baishnab poet, Dina Krushna Das describes in "Rasa



Kallola" as :- "Kachhap Adi Matschya Abatar Jaka. Karibaku Jata Jagannath Janak".

(Rasa Kallol-1/17)

(Note -Sangamati Ahari)

(All the incarnations like turtle and fish etc. are being incarnated out of Sri Jagannath).

Apart from this example there are several instances in Baishnab literatures. So there should not be any doubt or difference between Param Brahma Bhagaban of Sri Golak Dham and Sri Jagannath of Sri Neelachala Dham. What is Bhagaban Himself, His statue (Sri Bigraha) on wood or stone is the same and His name is the same. In saying elaborately Bhagaban of Sri Golak Dham, Sri Jagannath of Sri Neelachala Dham and His statues (Sri Bigrahas) like Rama, Krushna, Hari, Bishnu, Nrusingh etc. and these names are the same and one without any distinction.

Sri Jagannath does not reside on His Dham only. He is also expanded in *Jiva* (Living creatures) and *Jada* (things without life). As He expands Himself, He is known as Bishnu. In the scripture, Srimad Bhagabat Geeta in chapter seven in stanza nineteen - He is also told as " Basudev Sarbam" (Whatever we see Basudev Sri Jagannath is available there) In that stanza it is also said that those learned persons who realise that Sri Jagannath is everywhere those persons are rare.

It is also said in Srimad Bhagabat Geeta in chapter five and stanza eighteen that the seers have equal sight towards righteous Brahmins, aborigins, cows, elephants, dogs and snakes. In that sacred book it is also told at chapter eight and stanza fourteen that one who remembers Sri Jagannath always He is available to him easily. We have heard that by taking a piece of Saga from Draupadi He has satisfied the Sage Durbasa and his disciples and he had also saved Ajamil from the hands of the servants of Jama. There are numerous examples in the book, " Dadhyata Bhakti". We have also heard about giving Mahaprasad to Bandhu Mohanty on His golden plate and taking coconut from the aborigin Dasia. There are several

books written on highness of Sri Jagannath. It can be concluded wholly that Sri Jagannath is easily available and He is accessible according to whole hearted desire of *Jiva*.

Sri Jagannath is Krupanidhi or merciful. It is told earlier that Sri Jagannath would give whatever is asked for. But we have to consider what we would ask Him. If we seek for worldly pleasure He would satisfy by giving it, to get this we would suffer by taking birth, old age and death. If we ask for Mukti (Salvation) we would be saved from birth, old age and death circles.

It is true that Sri Jagannath is dependant upon Bhaktas (Optimists) but he is not nourishing enmity towards the pessimists.

Sri Jagannath is well wisher of *Jiva*. Even if His appearance is not seen by the people by pronouncing His name all sins would be destroyed.

Jiva gets pain due to worldly attachment and gets trouble in the cycle of birth, old age and death. To get rid of these pains one has to completely surrender before the Supreme God and would observe Bhakti (devotion) without any break to Sri Jagannath. The devotion or Bhakti is a dedication and it is not obtained easily. It is a Joga (attachment to God). One who would give up all desires of his worldly being he would not have any fear of death. The Jogis attach themselves on the lotus feet of Sri Jagannath and get peace without fear in Bhakti Joga (Devotional attachment to the Lord) in joint devotion of knowledge and deattachment.

We should give up our all desires and uninterruptedly make devotional attachment to Sri Jagannath and would take shelter before His lotus feet. He is our only abode.

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Administrative Arrangements of Shree Jagannath Temple

Dr. D.P. Choudhury

Introduction

Lord Shree Jagannath is the deity well recognized not only in India but also in abroad. His Almighty has power of vision to see, power of hear, power of judgment to decide, power of speaking to communicate and the powers what not. It is believed that the Hindus worship Lord Jagannath but He is so broad that He reaches to the people of other religions. We may be miser to keep in confined within our hearts, but his Almighty goes beyond any body's sole and imagination. He is God to bring up human beings. He is omnipresent, kindles light to focus every living beings. Without Him, the world is full of worries, disturbances, unhappiness and various ailments. When He is so kind, great, stable and full of peace, it is our duty to serve Him as a servant.

Evolution of Legislation

Taking cue from the purity of the services to be rendered to Lord Jagannath, the Government, the people thought to streamline all nitikanti and seva puja of Lord Jagannath, Maa Subhadra and Shri Balabhadra sitting on the alter inside the sanctum of the Temple. It is the king of Khurda and later on became the king of Puri was managing the Temple and the Endowments of Lord Jagannath. As there was mis-management, the Puri Shree Jagannath Temple Act, 1952 vide

Orissa Act XIV of 1952 was enacted to provide for the administration of the Puri Shree Jagannath Temple preventing mis-management of the Temple and its Endowments by consultation of the rights and duties of Sevaks, Pujaris and such other persons connected with the Seva Puja and management. Such act came into force from 05th September 1952 vide Notification No.6105 dt.5.9.1952. There are altogether nine sections under this erstwhile Puri Shree Jagannath Temple (Administration) Act, 1952. This is the first legislation made by the Orissa Legislative Assembly after a debate on 09th July, 1952. Under this Act, 'endowment' means all property belonging to or given or endowed for the support of the Temple or given or endowed for the performance of any service including the service of offerings to the deity or charity connected therewith and includes the institution concerned and also the premises thereof, but does not include gifts of property made as personal gifts to the Sevak, Pujari or other employees of the Temple. Also under this Act, the 'Specific endowment' means any property or money endowed for the performance of any specific service or charity in the Temple. This Act also defines 'Temple' means the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri, other temples within its premises, all their appurtenant and subordinate shrines, other sacred places and tanks



and any additions which may be made thereto after the commencement of this Act. Under section 3 of this Act, a Special Officer of Hindu religion was appointed by the State Government for preparation of record, consolidating the rights and duties of different Sevaks and Pujaris and such other persons connected with the Seva, Puja or management of the Temple and its endowments. Besides this officer, there was provision to appoint a good number of officers to assist him. At first the Special Officer will issue special notice requiring Sevaks, Pujaris with the persons engaged with Seva Puja of the Temple or such other persons to whom the Special Officer thinks fit to appoint before him within the specified time and produce documents of information as and when required by such Officer. The record or part thereof so prepared from time to time by the Special Officer shall be published in the prescribed manner and such publication of such record or part thereof in the gazette shall be final and shall not be called in question in any court of law. Any person aggrieved by any entry or part thereof may prefer an appeal before the District Judge at Puri. The District Judge or other Judicial Officers of the rank of District Judge after hearing the parties, communicate his orders to the State Government and cause the modification, if any, to be published in the gazette and on such publication the record stands modified accordingly. Under this Act, there is a provision under section 8 to punish a person if any person fails to comply the requirements of special notice issued by the Special Officer while exercising the power under that Act. The Punishment is fine not exceeding Rs.500/- and in case of continued offence to fine not exceeding Rs.50/- during the period of continuous offence. Thus, there are all together nine sections under this Act. Under this Act, the State Government have power to frame rule for which Jagannath Temple Administration

Rules, 1952. Under this Rule, the Special Officer appointed under the above Act should be a member of the Orissa Judicial Service Class-I and the officer assisted should be a member of the Subordinate Judicial Service Class-I and II. Under this rule, the record of Temple will consist of record of all nitis, compulsory routine ceremonies and rituals, daily periodicals festives for the Temple, the record of right and duties of different Sevaks, Pujaris and other persons employed have or connected with Seva puja and management of the Temple and a record of various sources of income of Temple and its endowments. As such, there are provisions enshrined in the rules how to prepare the record of right concerning those above subjects, method of conducting enquiry, maintenance of the registers or documents. Also it has maintained in the rule to allow allowances to the witnesses attending the enquiry.

From the foregoing discussed, it is clear that the legislation have clear intention to prepare the record of rights to streamline the nitikanti, sevapuja and management of Shree Jagannath Temple and accordingly, the Judicial authorities have been deployed for better enquiry and disposal of the objects in conformity with the aims and objects to frame such Act and to see that Lord Jagannath is not discomforted in any manner. On the other hand, there should not be mis-management in the affairs connected with the deity.

The aforesaid Act and Rules only bestowed their attention towards preparation of record of rights and performance of Seva Puja of the deity. The Management still did not improve. It is needless to say that the ancient Temple of Lord Jagannath of Puri ever since its inception been an institution of unique national importance in which millions of Hindu devotees from regions far and wide have reposed their faith and belief



and have regarded it as the epitome of their tradition and culture. It may not be out of place to mention that after the British conquest the superintendence, control and management of the affairs of the Temple have been the direct concern of successive Rulers, Governments and their officers and of the public exchequer. Of course by Regulation IV of 1809 passed by the Governor General in Council on 28th April 1809 and thereafter by other laws and regulations and in pursuance of arrangement entered into with the Raja of Puri and the said Raja came to be entrusted hereditarily with the management of the affairs of the Temple and its properties as Superintendent subject to control and supervision of the ruling power. But the administration under the Superintendent became deteriorated and a situation has arisen rendering it expedient to reorganize the scheme of management of the affairs of the Temple and its properties and provide better administration and governance therefore in supersession of all previous laws, regulations and arrangements having regard to the ancient customs and usages and the unique and traditional nitis and rituals contained in the Record of Rights prepared under the above Act, 1952.

Development of Legislative Changes

Another Act namely; Shree Jagannath Temple Act, 1955 was enacted repealing the Orissa Hindu Religious Endowment Act, 1951 which was the controlling affairs of Lord Jagannath till then save and except the application of provisions of Shree Jagannath Temple Act, 1952. This Act was assented by President of India on 15.10.1955 published in Orissa Gazette on 4.11.1956. At first, section 123 were made operational whereas rest of the provisions came into force on 27th October, 1960 having been published in the Orissa Gazette Extraordinary issue No.670 dt.25th October. 1960.

The salient features of this Act, 1955 is to bring different reforms so far the affairs connected with the temple. This Act also recognizes the Record of Right prepared under Shree Jagannath Temple Act, 1952.

This Act also underwent changes and the last amendment was made in 2004. There are all together 5 chapters under this Act. It is better to explain the provisions relating administrative changes under this act.

Administrative Reforms

In the earlier Shree Jagannath Temple Act, 1952, there was no committee. But in the new legislation, Government has substituted a Committee called "Shree Jagannath Temple Management Committee" constituted under section 6 of the new Act. This Act became the supreme of the Temple Administration. It consists of Raja of Puri as Chairman and an officer not below the rank of Addl. Chief Secretary, Ex-officio member who shall be the Working Chairman, Chief Administrator, Ex-officio member who shall be Secretary, Collector of the District of Puri as Ex-officio member, the Addl. Secretary of Law Department in charge of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration, Ex-officio member, the Commissioner of Endowment appointed under Orissa Hindu Religious Endowment Act. 1951 as Ex-officio member, the Superintendent of Police, Puri as Ex-officio member, Superintendent, Archologist of Archological Survey of India at Bhubaneswar as Ex-officio member, a person to be nominated by the State Govt. from among the persons sitting on the Mukti Mandap as member, one person representing from Maths and other institutions connected with Seva puja or Niti of the Temple or any Hindu Religious Institutions to be nominated by the State Government as member, five persons to be nominated by State Govt. from



among the Sevaks of the Temple as members and 3 persons (one of them should be Chartered Accountant) from among other categories of persons. It is clearly mentioned that all these members should profess Hindu religion. The Committee can also co-opt other persons as member, but not exceeding 4 in numbers. The duties of this Committee is -

- (1) to arrange proper performance of seva puja and of the daily and periodical nitis of the Temple in accordance with the Record of Right.
- (2) to provide facilities for proper performance of worship by the pilgrims.
- (3) to ensure the safe custody of the funds, valuables, securities and jewelries and for preservation and management of the properties vested in the Temple,
- (4) to ensure maintenance of order, discipline and proper hygienic conditions in the Temple,
- (5) to ensure that fund of the specific and religious endowments are spent according to the wishes so far as may be known as donors',
- (6) to make provision for payment of suitable emoluments to its salaried staff,
- (7) to arrange for preparation of list of immovable properties endowed to Lord Jagannath and Trust created for offering of bhog or performance of seva in the Temple,
- (8) to prepare and implement the schemes with prior approval of State Government to generate income of the Temple,
- (9) to take steps for preservation of any building or room situated within the premises of Temple from any person who

is seized to render the service for the performance for which such building or room was allotted or if such service is absolute and to do all such things as may be incidental and conducive to the efficient management of the affairs of the Temple and its endowments or to the convenience of the pilgrims.

It appears the Committee has been entrusted the duty right from performance of Niti till all sorts of preservation of properties of the Temple. In order to carry out such duties, the Committee has power to constitute a Subcommittee. The working Chairman has been entrusted the duty to ensure the resolution passed by the Committee are properly implemented and to ensure proper coordination among the Temple administration, District administration and the State Government in the administrative affairs of the Temple. Not only but also the Chief Administrator and under him the Dy. Chief Administrator and other officers of different ranks of All India Service or State Govt. Service will be appointed to assist the Chief Administrator. The Chief Administrator has been assigned the responsibility for the custody of all the records and properties of the Temple and shall arrange for proper collection of offerings made in the Temple and shall have power to appoint an officer and employee of the Temple, to lease out any land or building of the Temple for a period not exceeding 3 years, to undertake any work or emergency repairs, to decide the disputes with regard to collection, distribution or apportionment of offerings, fees and other receipts in cash and also in respect of seva puja and nitis, whether ordinary or special in nature. It is his duty to get the niti and seva puja performed according to Record of Right by any other person in absence of sevak or substitute or failure on the part of any person to perform his duty. He has also power to



issue instructions or directions from time to time for controlling of the activities conducted and the management of all institutions including Mukti Mandap and Pandit Sabha functioning within the premises of the Temple. Of course, he has to obtain the approval of the Committee while exercising the power to appoint officers and employees of the Temple to lease out the land and to take custody of all records and to undertake any other work not exceeding Rs.50,000/- or taking possession of the valuables. One officer from among the members of the Indian Administrative Service or Orissa Administrative Service not below the rank of Joint Secretary will be appointed as the Administrator (Devp.) one officer from among the officers of O.A.S(I) not below the rank of Joint Secretary as Administrator (Niti) and another officer from among the cadre of I.P.S. or O.P.S. not below the rank of Additional Superintendent of Police as Administrator (Security). Thus, the Administrators being senior most officers are to look after three major portfolios of the Temple. These are major administrative reforms of the Temple. In order to have effective management of the Temple under section 21(a), all Sevaks, Office holders and employees attached to the Temple are under the control of the Chief Administrator and for any breach of trust, incapacity, disobedience of lawful orders, neglect or willful absence from duty, disorderly behaviour or conduct derivative to the discipline or dignity of the Temple or for any other sufficient cause. The Chief Administrator can withdraw receipt of emoluments or perquisites, impose a fine of an amount exceeding Rs.200/-, suspend or dismiss any of Sevaks, Office holders and employees attached to the Temple. Besides, under section 21(b), the Chief Administrator may place any Sevak, Office holder and employee

attached to the Temple under suspension where a disciplinary proceeding initiated against him is contemplated or pending. In the recent amendment of section 21(b), the Chief Administrator can also make suspension of any Sevak, Office holder and employee if a case against him in respect of any criminal offence is under investigation, enquiry or trial. Whereas the Chief Administrator can suspend a Sevak if he continues any offence inside the Temple premises or connected with the affairs of the Temple. Thus, the provisions made in the Act are mainly aimed to proper Sevapuja and Nitikanti of the deity and observance of festivals without any variations. Unless the Chief Administrator has given a handle under such provisions of law, it may not be possible for smooth management of the Temple and timely niti or seva puja of the deity. In a democratic process, Justice Delivery System has always protected the rights of the human being. So when a person feels aggrieved against any administrative order passed by the Chief Administrator, he can prefer an appeal before the Appellate Sub-Committee of the Temple which consists of the Working Chairman who shall be its Chairman and two other members elected in the prescribed manner from the Committee from among the Non-Judicial members thereof. However in 2008 Section 21(b) has undergone changes. Thus, the legislation has brought a wide administrative reforms in the affairs of Shree Jagannath Temple, Puri.

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Kalpabata : The Age Old Wish Fulfilling Tree

Dr. Saroj Kumar Panda

The word 'Kalpa' denotes two meanings. Firstly, it means tense or time. When added with Bata it takes new meaning i.e. the age old tree. Kalpabata exists since time immemorial. It is the oldest among many old things those are still remaining in Srikhetra Puri. According to Puranic Sources this sacred tree has been staying in all ages i.e. Satya, Tretaya, Dwapara and Kali. The second meaning that assigned to this tree is due to its ability to fulfill wishes of devotees. In one sentence, we can say Kalpabata as the wish fulfilling tree.

Presently Kalpabata is worshipped in between Satyanarayan Temple and Mukti Mandap of Srimandir complex. A stone and clay pedestal (Mandap) has been constructed around the stem of Kalpabata. To make it more attractive, many appliques have hanged on branches of the tree. There is a path around the tree to round up by the devotees. It is believed that three rounds around it fulfill wishes of the desired person.

Hoping for son, the childless women worship Kalpabata with special prayer meant for that. The shadow of Kalpabata relax both body and mind of an individual. Therefore visitors sit under the tree for time-being.



Krsna on Kalpabata leave floating on Mahodadhi dading pralaya.

Kalpabata is situated in the centre point (Navisthala) of Sankhakhetra Puri. It is surrounded by small temples of different deities like Bateswar Mahadeva, Bata Krishna, Bata Balamakunda, Bata Madhava, Bata Ganesh, Bata Mangala, Bata Jagannath and Bata Markandeya.

Jagannath Das, the author of Odiya Bhagabata had spent many times under the Kalpabata and regarded it as the most Sacred place inside the temple complex. From here he was going to see Lord Jagannath through Jagamohana. Near Bata

Ganesh there was the historic meet between Sri Chaitanya and Jagannath Das when the later was discussing the verses of Bhagabata. Sri Chaitanya was deeply moved by the scholarly analysis of the great epic. He embraced Jagannath Das and



bestowed him the title 'Atibadi'. The Buddhist who considered Lord Jagannath as incarnation of Buddha also compared 'Kalpabata' with Mahabodhidruma. So the Buddhist in collaboration with the devotees of Lord Jagannath had established the 'Saugata Narayana Statue' under Kalpabata.

Antiquity and Historicity :

It is very difficult to determine the origin of Kalpabata. It is said that during the annihilation of the entire world, Kalpabata was not immersed in the water. Maharshi Markandeya had seen baby Vishnu was floating on a bata leaf at the top of the grand banyan tree. Therefore Kalpabata is worshipped as Vishnu and its four branches are compared with four arms of the Lord. Vyasadeva had given the view that Kalpabata is originated from the body of Lord Vishnu. So the darshan of this tree gives good results. The Skandapurana gives vivid description of this tree and the results of its visit. In Mahabharata Age Kalpabata was known in the name Devanasana bata. Because the auspicious pillar of the Mahabharata war was erected from the branch of this tree. Sarala Das has also specifically described about this tree. As per his description, king Indradyumna was once sitting under Kalpabata with anxiety in mind for construction of grand temple. By that time a stranger reached there and gave him plan in connection with the construction. Later Mahapurusa Achyutananda Das also got enlightenment and super natural power from here.

The tradition of tree worship goes back to the Vedic period in history. By that time the Banyan tree was known and worshipped as Nyagradha. It was considered most sacred and great. The Vedas and Puranas contain eloquent verses glorifying this tree.

Gajapati Kapilendra Dev (1435-65) had conquered many kingdoms of India like Malaya, Gouda, Delhi, Karnataka and extended the boundary of Odisha. He had also collected large wealth from the defeated kingdoms. He surrendered all these valuable wealth before Lord Jagannath under Kalpabata. The real relation between Lord Jagannath with Kalpabata is witnessed after Car festival. When Lords return to Srimandir, after entering into Kurmabedha Shri Jagannath stops for sometime facing towards Kalpabata. From there the Patimahapatras receive the deity with obeisance.

Kalpabata has also link with Kaka Bhusanda. Bhusanda Kaka was cursed by saint Lomasa for which he was sitting worried on Kalpabata. In fact, he was searching the way for liberation from the curse. Rohini Kunda was situated near Kalpabata. Suddenly Kaka Bhusanda fell into Rohini Kunda, got salvation and turned into four armed Vishnu. Since then he is worshipped as Bata Narayan near Kalpabata.

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Sri Jagannath Suprabhatam - An Evaluation

Tarakanta Mohanty

The book Sri Jagannath Suprabhatam and other stotras written in Sanskrit with English commentary has been authored by a retired I.A.S officer of Orissa cadre Shri S.Sundarrajan, twenty-nine years back at Sambalpur on 2.9.80.

Many seers and saints of India as well as poets of Orissa have eulogised Lord Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe in their thought provoking stotras and lyrics.

Among them prominent are Shankaracharya 9th century A.D. Kavi Jayadev of Orissa of thirteenth century, Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja (1670 to 1720) Dinakrushna Das (1666 to 1713) Kabisurya Baladev Rath (1789 to 1845) poet Salbeg (seventeenth century).

After Shankaracharya's (Kadachit Kalindi Tata Bipine, Mudavirinari Bandana Kamala Swada Madhupa--Jagannath Swami Nayana Pathagami Bhabatu me eulogizing Lord Jagannath in his slokam and poet Jagadeva's Dasavtar stotram "Pralaya Payodhi Jale Dhrutabanas Bedam--Jaya Jagannatha Hare. Shri Sundarrajan's eulogizing of Jagannath, *Shri Purosottama Hare Achyuta Suprabhatam* is a very popular sloka written in the twentieth century.

This booklet has four parts-(1) Sri Jagannatha Suprabhatam with 29 slokas. (2) Sri Jagannatha stotram having 11 slokas, Sri Jagannatha Saranagati Stotram having 108 slokas and Sri Jagannath Mangala Sasanak having 14 slokas with English Commentaries.

Those who have written 'Foreward' of this booklet are of the opinion that "The lucid composition, fitting expressions and masterly style would impress even reader. A powerful reader is bound to be enchanted and overwhelmed by the elegance and thought provoking composition. Shri Sundarrajan is one fittingly to be counted in the line of our traditional poets.

They are of the opinion that there is "Suprabhatam for many of our deities, like Venkatesa Suprabhatam but Sri Jagannath Suprabhatam was wanting. Shri Sundarrajan has accomplished it. It would indeed be appropriate that the Suprabhatam be daily recited in Sri Mandir like Dasabatar Stotrum of poet Jayadev being recited in Srimandir every evening and every night before Lord Jagannath since many centuries.

In Sundarrajan's language, in the introductory portion of the booklet it has been written that "The legend of Lord Jagannath commences with the beginning of Kaliyuga. After the mission of His Avatar was over, Lord Krishna decided to return to Sri Vaikuntha on the day of Kaliyuga set in. Also he had the curse of Gandhani on Him. He, therefore, brought an end to his Avatar by allowing Himself to be shot by the arrow of a Sabara (Hunter). The rest of the story till the wooden idol of Lord Jagannath came to be installed in Sri Mandir (1115 A.D) at the Purushottamdharm (Puri) is shrouded in mystery. It appears that the mortal remains of Lord Krishna, worshipped as Darubrahma by



Viswvasu, the Sabara king, are now being worshipped in the wooden idol of Lord Jagannath.

Thus, Lord Jagannath is a continuation of the Avatar of Lord Krishna. It is said that He will form the link with the next Avatar, viz. Kalki. Lord manifests Himself in five main forms. Viz. Para or the transcendental form in Sri Vaikuntha, the Vyuha, or the representative form in the Milk Ocean, Archa or the idol form found in different holy shrines, Vibhava or the life form as animal or man or a combination of both and Antaryami or the form of Inner Soul. One would be inclined to classify Lord Jagannath as an Archa Avatar of God, but for all practical purposes. He is a continuation of the Vibhava Avatar of Lord Krishna. The various festival of Lord Jagannath round the year are similar to the festivals that Lord Krishna must have had during the early years of his Avatar in the world. Lord Jagannath is the veritable Emperor of Puri and surrounding areas. In his human form, Lord Krishna ruled the west coast with his capital at Dwaraka. Now with His mortal remains in a wooden body, He is ruling the east coast with his capital at Puri only this can explain the various deviations in the form of worship followed in Sri Mandir, contrary to the forms of worship followed in other thriness where Lord in Archa Avatar is worshipped. It is only here that the non-brahmins are allowed to touch and handle the idol and also to be in sole possession of the idol for quite some time, even the food of Lord Jagannath (Mahaprasad) is cooked by non-brahmins. Thus Lord Krishna appears to have chosen out of his mortal world for the benefit of the numerous souls who are not in a position to recognize Him in the other forms being deluded by his Maya. All the great saints of our country without any exception had made it a point to visit Puri and worship Lord Jagannath. How can anyone seeking to know the Lord seeing His manifestation right here ? Even saints belonging to other faiths, (other than Hindu are reported to have sought the blessings of Lord Jagannath. This only proves the fact that the

different religions are only different paths to reach Him who is the ultimate goal. The Jagannath cult that has developed around Him, is, in fact, a harmonious blend of all faiths accepting Lord Jagannath as the origin and Lord of the Universe. If we look at Lord Jagannath with the eyes of Shri Shankaracharya, He is the Brahman and only truth. Lord Balabhadra is only his reflection in Prakriti and Subhadra represents the Prakriti, itself composed of the three qualities, viz Sattwa, Rajas and Tama. If we look at Him with the eyes of Sri Ramanujacharya, He is Paramatman. Lord Balabhadra is the Jeevatman with Paramatman fully manifesting in His soul (and so he is also an Avtar) and Subhadra is composed of three qualities. If we look at Him with the eyes of Madhava Acharya, He is Paramatman. Lord Balabhadra represents Jeevatman who has reached upto Him and Subhadra the Maya in between. If we look at Lord Jagannath with the eyes of Chaitanya, He is Ishwar while Lord Balabhadra represents the *chit* potency and Subhadra the illusory energy or Maya. Thus Lord Jagannath has been seen by different saints in different forms. He still remains as incomprehensible as ever. How can mortals with our limited power of comprehension and being a small and infinitesimal part of Him comprehend Him in his entirety?

In his 'Shri Jagannath Mangalasanam' in No.9, 10, 11 felicitation to Lord Jagannath he has composed stotram.

(9) Felicitation to Lord Jagannath, who has been looked at differently by Acharyas belonging to different faiths who came (to Puri) from different places.

(10) Felicitation to Lord Jagannath who has been worshipped by Ramanuja, Chaitanya, Sankaracharya and Guru Nanak, themselves worthy of worship.

(11) Felicitation to Lord Jagannath, worthy of meditation, who has been sung by poet Jayadeva the king of poets in his Gita Govinda Kavya.



Lord Jagannath's Different Names

1. Achyuta : Achyuta is the first name of Lord pronounced during Achamana - an essential part and pre-requisite of every ritual. It begins, "At the end of the night, the brightness of dawn is coming up in the East. Oh consort of Laxmi awaken for the well-being of three worlds. Oh resident of Niladri the daily rituals have to be preformed. Good morning Oh Purushottama Hari Achyuta.

2. Good morning, Oh ! Purushottama Sriman Ananta (Ananta is the second name of the Lord Pronounced during Achamana.)

3. Good morning, Oh ! Lord of Niladri, Govinda (Govinda is the third name of the Lord pronounced during Achamana.)

4. Good morning to you, Oh ! Keshava, Lord of Niladri (Keshava is the first of the twelve names of the Lord Pronounced during Achamana)

5. Good morning Oh ! Lord Purushottama Narayana (Narayana is the second of the twelve sacred names of the Lord pronounced during Achamana.)

6. Good morning to you, Oh ! Madhava, Lord of Niladri (Madhava is the third of the twelve names of the Lord and sixth name pronounced during Achamana.

7. Good morning, Oh ! Govinda, resident of Niladri (Govinda is the fourth of the twelve sacred names of the Lord and seventh name pronounced during Achamana).

8. Good morning to you, Oh ! Lord Purusottama Vishnu. (Vishnu is the fifth of the twelve sacred names of the Lord and eighth name pronounced during Achaman.)

9. Good morning, Oh ! Madhusudana Lord of Niladri. (Madhusudana is the sixth of the twelve sacred names of the Lord and the ninth name of the Lord pronounced during Achamana.)

10. Good morning, Oh ! Trivikrama, Lord of Puri. (Trivikrama is the seventh of the twelve sacred names and the tenth name of the Lord pronounced during Achamana.)

11. Good morning, Oh ! Vamana, resident of Niladri (The use of the word "Vamana in this Sloka referring to Ratha Yatra is to recapitulate the famous Sloka ' Rathasthang Bamanam Drustwa Punajnama Nabidyate- that is the eighth of twelve sacred names of the Lord and the eleventh name of the Lord pronounced during Achamana.)

12. Good morning, Oh ! Shridhara, resident of Puri (Sridhara is the ninth of the twelve sacred names of the Lord pronounced during Achamana.)

13. Good morning, Oh ! Hrushiksha Ananta, the jewel of Niladri (Hrushiksha is the tenth of the twelve sacred names of the Lord, and the thirteenth name of the Lord, pronounced during Achamana.)

14. Good morning, Oh ! Lord Purusottama Sri Padmanabha. (Padmanabha is the eleventh of the twelve sacred names of the Lord pronounced during Achamana.)

15. Good morning, Oh ! Damodara, (Damodara is the twelfth and the last of the twelve names of the Lord pronounced during Achamana.) So the fourteen sacred names of Lord Jagannath are (1) Achyuta, (2) Ananta, (3) Govinda, (4) Keshava, (5) Narayana, (6) Madhava, (7) Vishnu, (8) Madhusudana, (9) Trivikrama, (10) Vamana, (11) Sridhara, (12) Hrushiksha, (13) Padmanabha and (14) Damodara.

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Madhava Worship in Prachi Valley

Kshirod Prasad Mohanty

Like earliest civilizations - the Aryan, Egyptian, Babylonia, Assyrian which were established on the banks of rivers, Prachi Valley civilization, one of the glorious civilizations of Orissa flourished on the banks of Prachi river. No one can be able to imagine about the greatness of such a splendid civilization without though investigation. Though small in size as compared with big rivers of Orissa like Mahanadi, Brahmani, Birupa, Budhabalanga, Subarnarekha, it contains the hidden treasure of a magnificent past. Originated from the river Kuakhai and covering approximately 48 kilometers, it falls in the sea near Keutajanga village of Kakatpur P.S.¹ To the south of Kuakhai, the Prachi is known as the Gambhariganda. Near Bhinjharpur, it is connected with Kushabhadra, a branch of Kuakhai. To the south of Bhinjharpur Prachi, in the name of Sola river flows down as far as Govindaramapatna. The Sola river is then connected with Devi river, the lower course of Kathajodi and two streamlets called the Banrei and the Kahiaghai.² After a long coverage. It passes through the village Kakatpur and falls into the Bay of Bengal.³

Traditions confirmed by local chronicles reveal that most of the monuments of Prachi Valley which are now in all stages of decay were constructed during circa 7th century to circa 15th century A.D. The greatness of these religious edifices were left to decay with time and most of

them are ruined today. Many splendid monuments which have been attracting and keeping the public attention since their foundations have remained as places of worship.

A systematic study of the Prachi Valley shows that major Indian religions like Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, Saktism and Vaishnavism grew chronologically without attacking the religious and philosophical sentiments of the of the people of those days. The worship of Madhava, one of the twenty four manifestations of Lord Vishnu in Prachi Valley is very common and had immense influence on that area.

As we all know that Madhava is one of the manifestations of Lord Vishnu. Although Vishnu has one thousand significant names of Praise, but twenty-four are considered to be the most important and are daily recited by Brahmans/ Vaishnabs in their daily prayer. These twenty-four manifestations are alike in their iconographic features; i.e. they are all standing figures, with no bends in the body, possessing four arms, and adorned with kirita (crown) and other usual ornaments; each of them stands upon a padmasana. The difference between ant two of these images can be identified with the way in which the Sankha, the Chakra, the Gada and the Padma are found distributed in their four hands.⁴ The Rupamandana⁵ furnishes the twenty-four names of Vishnu and corresponding arrangements



of four ayudhas in the four hands in each case. In case of Madhava deity he mentions that the manifestation of Madhava holds Chakra in his back right hand, Sankha in his back left hand, Padma in his front left hand and Gada in front right hand.

The history of Madhava worship in India is traced from the time of extension of Vaisnavism with various forms of Vishnu. This popular religion might have flourished in Orissa in the dawn of its reflection, but archeological evidences suggest its existence from the time of the Matharas, the contemporary of Guptas. The Mathara rulers embraced the Vaisnavite principles and built monuments in honour of Vishnu.⁶ So far Prachi Valley is concerned it is said that this valley is very famous for the worship of Dvadasa Sambhu and Dvadasa Madhava. A short reference to the Dvadasa Madhava and several other images of the same in the valley is required to indicate the significance of the cult.

The first among Dvadasa Madhava is seen in the premises of Kapileswar temple. Since the temple is no longer in existence, it is kept in a pitiable condition in the Gokarneswar temple.

Triveni Madhava is worshipped at the confluence of Triveni near Bhileswar temple. This place is popularly known as Manikarnika tirtha and is sanctified by Triveni Madhava. Here, the image is worshipped with Lakshmi.⁷

Niali, 50 km far from Bhubaneswar on the eastern bank of Prachi is famous for Sovaneswar temple, built in 1170 A.D. and Madhava temple. In course of time, the Madhava temple was broken down. Eight such beautiful images of Madhava and one image of Varaha are kept in the compound of Sovaneswar temple at Niali. Besides, the following sites of Prachi Valley contains the images of Madhava.

Two Vishnu images affixed inside the Jagamohan of the Brahma temple at Niali,

Madhava image kept under a tree at Korakara; the unique Madhava image worshipped as Lalita-Madhava at Chahata, two Vishnu images kept inside Jagamohan of Amaresvara temple at Amaresvara temple; two beautiful images worshipped inside a thatched room at Pitapara; the Vishnu image kept inside the Natamandira of the Ramesvara temple at Suhagpur; Madhava image worshipped in miniature temple inside the compound of Gramesvara temple at Nivarana; the image worshipped inside a renovated temple as Nila-Madhava at Nilakanthapur, Madhava images inside the temple compound of the Mangala at Kakatpur⁸ Madhava images inside the Jagamohana of Gramesvara Siva temple at Lataharana⁹ Mudgal Madhava in the village Mudgal; the images inside the Jagamohana of Somesvara temple at Somesvara; the image inside the Visvanatha temple at Krishnaprasad; the Vishnu images at Kenduli, the birth place of noted Sanskrit poet Sri Jayadev; Madhava image at Adasapur; Madhava deity inside the Gokarneswar temple at Kantapara; Madhava image in the village Bolara; Madhava in the village Raghunathpur, P.S. Kakatpur; Madhava image in the village Gambharipada and The Vishnu image inside the Siva temple at Nasikesvara, all these images give a clear picture of Madhava cult which is now widely prevalent in Prachi Valley.

Besides Madhava worship in Prachi Valley, development of the cult is found in other parts of Orissa. Nilamadhava temple at Gandharadi in the district of Boudh, Nilamadhava of Kantilo, Lokamadhava image in the village Arali located on the bank of Mahendra Tanaya of Parlakhemundi and Dvadasa Madhava in Biraja kshetra at Jajpur are the good examples of this cult.

Regarding Dvadasa Madhava, the names depicted in Viraja Mahatmya (Manuscript preserved in the Orissa State Museum) are found



something different from the names of the Madhava images of Prachi Valley.

1. Adi Madhava, 2. Ananta Madhava, 3. Bhoga Madhava, 4. Champak Madhava, 5. Rama Madhava, 6. Prasanna Madhava, 7. Purusottama Madhava, 8. Sudarsan Madhava, 9. Janardana Madhava, 10. Narakautak Madhava, 11. Vasudeva Madhava, 12. Govinda Madhava.

The sites and archeological remains of Viraja Kshetra have been surveyed, but no trace of Madhava sculptures are found there. It is expected that due to frequent Muslim attacks the shrines of Madhava might have been dashed into pieces along with other temples of the Kshetra.¹⁰

Similarly, in Prachi Mahatmya, edited and compiled by Sri Balaram Das, published in the year 1975, we find some reference to Dvadasa Madhava, but these names of Madhavas are attached to particular place names - for example Madhava of village Madhava, Lalita Madhava, situated between the river Prachi and Lalita, Bolara Madhava of village Bolara, Mudgal etc. There is no clear-cut description of on the other Madhava - images, where they have been taken from. It is supposed that they might have been transferred to other places due to damage of their respective shrines.¹¹

Regarding deteriorations of temples of Prachi Valley, it can be said that most of the monuments were constructed with bricks and mortars. These inorganic materials certainly met their natural decay in due course of time. The reason is that water, both in liquid and vapor form accelerates chemical process of deterioration. For example, stone, bricks and metals deteriorate due to sunshine, precipitation, humidity and temperature governed by the altitude, latitude, surroundings, proximity to the sea etc. As the monuments stood on the banks of Prachi and had close proximity to the sea, deterioration

is faster. Observing extremely beautiful eight images of Madhavas, the noted historian K.N. Mahapatra pointed out that such shifting of Madhava images to Sovaneswar temple was due to the attack of Moghuls. Fortunately, Moghul army was defeated and the temple of Sovaneswar and sculptures kept in the compound could be saved. From this statement, it can be surmised that there was the possibility of foreign attack to those monuments and some people might have demolished the structures in order to conceal the place. Whatever may be the intentions, these monuments and deities have been attracting the devotees to a great extent and simultaneously, they have been demonstrating the artistic capability of the Orissan Sculptures of those days.

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Holy Pilgrimage of Guru Nanak to Puri

Prof. Jagannath Mohanty

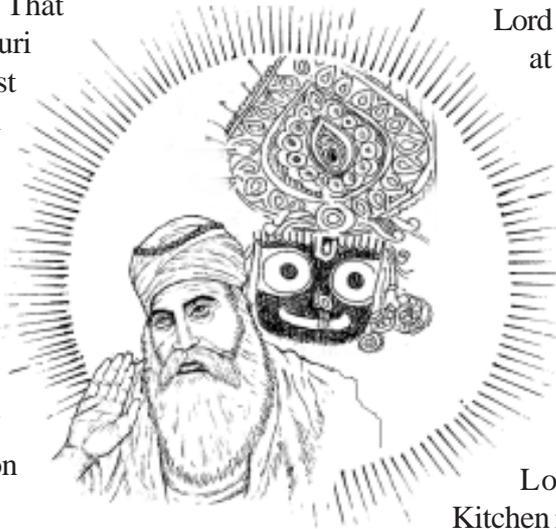
Srikshetra Puri is the abode of Sri Jagannath, Lord of the Universe and has attracted the pilgrims of all sections of the society irrespective of all religions, castes and colour. It is also regarded as the centre or site for salvation of all human beings, who suffer from sorrows and sufferings in this world and seek to get salvation. That is why, all pilgrims pay visit to Puri through ages. Among them most prominent are Adi Sankaracharya, Ramanuja, Nimbark, Nanak, Kabir, Vallavacharya, Srichaitanya and so on. Puri is the most popular spiritual centre of peace and in the country tranquility. It is observed by David Smith (1868) "The city of Puri is anything but a heaven upon the earth."

The daily rituals, fairs and festivals are so peculiar and interesting that the pilgrims from where they come enjoy and adore the deities and pay respect by worshipping them. The world-famous Car Festival of Puri, its most colourful cars, the rich rituals that are performed on various occasions, the Gajapati King sweeping the chariots himself are quite wonderful. The democratic and socialistic practices are prevalent

in the Srimandir administration. The greatness of Lord Jagannath has been ever eulogized by all devotees, saints and sanyasis.

Guru Nanaka was enlightened about the greatness of the deities and came to Orissa with a purpose to have "darshan" of Lord Jagannath. In 1506, He at the age of 36 or 37 reached the soil of Orissa. He arrived at Bhadrak where the settlement records give evidence of his coming and staying at the Sangat village in Bhadrak district. There Nanakjee organized "a Guruka Longer (Community Kitchen in the honour of Guru)

and mass prayers. In the Revenue Record, a plot is known as "Nanak Diha" (a field in the name of Nanak) on which people built a cottage. Nanak's village has been mentioned by a village poet in his writings. The name of the poet was Bansi Ballav Goswami and besides, in the writing "Bhadrak Kali Janan" contemporary poet called Rajaballav Mohanty. Even Guru Nanak himself has described in his "Japajee" about his





experience at Sangat. Then he set his feet at Srikshetra via Cuttack. It is said that he was received by the Gajapati king and then taken to Puri sea-shore at "Swargadwar. He traveled nearly 50,000 miles on feet during his pilgrimage. Guru Nanak was very much impressed with the holiness of the Puri Purusottam and greatness of Lord Jagannath. He preached universal love and sympathy that he enjoyed there.

Nanakjee's greatness was shown and realized by two of his disciples named Mardava and Bala who took shelter on the beach of Puri. They felt the pinch of thirst and prayed for getting drinking water which was made available to them through blessings of Nanakjee. The hole dug on the shore is still preserved and a Math has been set up nearby, which is known as Bauli Math. Similarly, Mangu Math was established near Singhadwar (Gate of Heaven). This Math is said to belong to Nanak Panthies. It is also mentioned by J.S. Armstrong, Magistrate to the Commissioner, Orissa Division about its location, in the year 1873. Two of his disciples called Mangoo and Gaddar from among Punjabis who established this Mangu Math. It is also told that Raja of Puri made an endowment in the honour of the saint and built some cottages there. The Gajapati Raja also granted the right of Chamar Seva or Mayur Panchhi Seva to be rendered by the Mahant of the Math. The total area of the

plot on which the Math was established 11 Gunthas and 21 Biswa, amounting to Rs.12,895/-.

In the year 1868 David Smith, Sanitary Commissioner of Bengal reported that Punjabees came to Puri walking on foot about 2000 miles for long six months ! They used to stay at Puri a day or two and walked back home happily. The Nanak Panthis were attracted to Lord Jagannath after Nanak's journey to Puri Dham. Raja Birakishore Dev granted a Sanand allowing Chamar Seva to the Mongu Math in the 16th century. Guru Nanak's association with Mangu Math and Galua Math have made them sacred which bear evidence of Nanakaji's coming to Puri and his deep reverence for Lord Jagannath.

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Manadatta in the Golden Plate

Pitambar Pradhani

The king of old Jayanagari kingdom Jayasingh had a daughter named Bishnupriya. The daughter was very intelligent as well as beautiful. Once a saint became guest of honour in the royal guest house. Bishnupriya heard from him the glory and fame of Lord Jagannath. From that day devotion arose in her heart about Lord Jagannath.

Once a servitor (Sebayat) of Lord Jagannath Sri Bandhu Mahapatra went to the kingdom of Jayasingh. One-day Sri Mahapatra heard about the deep devotion of Bishnupriya for Lord Jagannath. It came to Mahapatra's mind that she would give plenty of wealth if he visits her. Sri Mahapatra went to Bishnupriya. Sri Mahapatra was kept in the Rajbhaban with respect and devotion when she knew that he is a servitor (sebayat) of Lord Jagannath.

On the return day she told Princess Bishnupriya whether she would give anything for adoration of Lord Jagannath. I will deliver the same to Lord Jagannath in your pious name. Hearing that Princess Bishnupriya could not give any answer at once. She went inside telling the servitor to wait for a while.

Bishnupriya thought for a while that what can be the real want of the Lord of the universe ? Which valuable article can satisfy Him ? Thinking for a lot of time, she could not decide at the

beginning. At last she decided to give the mind to the Lord. Thinking the same she gave Sri Mahapatra a palmleaf written with the words Manadatta (mind-given) wrapped with silk cloth. For the travelling expenses she gave ten gold coins to Sri Mahapatra.

Sri Mahapatra thought that the Princess might have given some valuable articles inside silk cloth. On the way he opened the cloth and saw the Manadatta (mind-given) palmleaf. Being vexed he threw away the palmleaf.

With much wealths Sri Mahapatra arrived at Puri. He was engaged in the service of the Lord as usual. He saw a dream in the night, that Lord Jagannath telling him why he threw away His property or wealth, keeping his own wealth and property intact ? The property given by Bishnupriya was a great wealth for me. Now you prepare a golden necklace with a gold pendant written as Manadatta and place it in my neck.

Sri Mahapatra repented after the dream. He obeyed the order of Lord Jagannath and prepared a golden necklace with a golden pendant Manadatta written in it and garlanded the same in the neck of Lord Jagannath.

Pitambar Pradhani lives at Bamanabadu Lane, Markandewar Sahi, Puri.



Sri Jagannath A Unique Facet of Hindu Religion

Sarat Chandra Mahapatra

Sri Jagannath culture constitutes an eclectic system which has assimilated and incorporated in its fold the influences of many religious creeds and sects and became a unique converging point of divergent shades of Hindu religion. He is regarded as the complete manifestation of the Lord Supreme, Param Brahma, Vishnu or Narayan as contrasted with the other incarnations like Nrusingha, Ram, Krishna and Budha who were only partial revelations of that supreme god-head. Balabhadra, Subhadra, Jagannath and Sudarsana installed in the inner sanctuary of the great shrine at Puri on a raised platform called Ratnavedi or Throne of Jewels, do not approximate to any anthropomorphic gods or goddesses of Hindu pantheon.

The deities are fashioned only up to navel, the portion beneath is missing. Instead of proper arms with palms and fingers in different Mudras, the images of Balabhadra and Jagannath, have each two stumps horizontally emanating from the massive head. In the image of Subhadra, even this portion is missing making it fully arm and legless deity. As regardless Sudarsana, it is only a stumping without any remote anthropomorphic symptom.

Sri Jagannath is identified as Vishnu or Krishna. Lord Vishnu has been depicted in Hindu religious texts as a very beautiful figure with yellow apparels having four hands with divine emblems

of conch, mace, lotus and disc, adorned with clusters of pearl necklaces exceeding sly dazzling as they move about and the mark of Sri bhasma on His attractive chest. Krishna has been described as a charming cowherd boy with flute in hand, Radha by his side and surrounded by Gopis. But neither the figure of Sri Jagannath nor his other divine associates bear such a benign look to inspire the devotion of the worshippers. The face of Jagannath is black, the eyeballs disproportionately large, represented by patches of white paint, the pupils are round and black, the nose is a pointed snout, the mouth, a streak of red paint, curved upwards at the angle, and without chin. In the words of a western scholar, the whole is indeed a terrible object, terrible in its innate hideousness, yet more terrible in its connection with the surrounding circumstances. Thus the image of Jagannath, does not confirm to the aesthetic sense of a worshipper to be meditated upon, nor does it correspond to the Dhyana in which the deity is conceived during the process of Puja.

The combination of Sri Jagannath as Krishna, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarsana is more peculiar and most uncommon in Hindu religious world. Krishna is always found worshipped with his beloved Radha, Balabhadra is believed to be an incarnation of Siva, Sesanaga, Anata i.e. limitless time-eternity. Subhadra, is the younger sister of Krishna and wife of Arjuna, the



great hero of Mahabharat. Yoganidra with whom Krishna was exchanged was born at the same time with Balabhadra.

Some scholars equate this Yoganidra with Subhadra. But both Balabhadra and Subhadra are of no religious importance and not objects of veneration by Hindu devotees. Even assigning the main Jagannath Trio, the above religious status, fourth deity, Sudarsana remains unaccounted for. Such combination of deities is not only unique but incomprehensible. No convincing justification underlying such combination of deities has been tendered by scholars so far.

Lord jagannath sits on Sri Jantra and worshipped in Vijamantra - Klim which is also the Vijamantra of Sakti or Kali. In Tantrik texts like Mahanirvana Tantra, Naradapancharatra and Goutamiya kalpa etc. Jagannath is described as Dakhina Kalika. He is conceptual identification of Kali and Krishna finds physical manifestation in Jagannath which distinguishes him from all other deities of Hindu pantheon.

DaruBrahma, i.e. Supreme God head of wood is the other name of Lord Jagannath. Stone and metal idols are usually being the objects of worship in Hindu religious system, Jagannath quadruple are carved out of Nim (Melia azadiracta) wood which contains hard closed grains, susceptible to high polish and not liable to warp or crack while bitter taste prevents ravages of worms and insects. Still the statues being of wood can not sustain themselves for a long time. Their periodical renovation thus becomes inevitable, which is called Navakalevara meaning New Body. This Navakalevara ritual or the total transformation of deities into a new frame is nowhere observed in Hindu world, though there is scriptural prescription for the same.

The temple ritual system includes a period of fifteen days in a year known as Anabasar, when the Lords are supposed to suffer from fever. Excepting a special class of temple functionaries

called Daitas, who are believed to be of aboriginal origin and kinsmen of the Lord, no other temple priest or outsider is allowed to see them during this period. Such association of Lord Jagannath with His aboriginal kinsmen to the exclusion of all others and the humanistic behaviors of suffering from fever is totally a strange feature nowhere seen in any Vaishnavite shrine.

Lord Jagannath is regarded as Ganadevata or the God of the Mass. The mass appeal of the cult and the popular acceptability is unique and unparallel in the Hindu system of Idol worship. A Hindu worshipper believes that the deity, once consecrated in a temple, can only be touched by a special class of priests initiated for the purpose.

Touch of any other person defiles the deity and entails an elaborate procedure of purification. But Sri Jagannath transcends all such textual inductions by exposing Himself for mass contact and touch. Particularly during His famous car festival, the very fact of carrying the massive deities by tying them in silken ropes and pulling them by a large number of temple functionaries from the temple to the cars on bare dusty ground is itself a strange phenomenon nowhere else found. Sweeping of the cars by the king is another unique feature which indicates that nobody is greater than Him. The great Gajapati Maharaja playing the role of a sweeper, the lowliest in Hindu caste order exhibits the height of religious humility and conforms to the implication of Jagannath, the only Lord of the Universe. Of course, taking the deities in ceremonial cars, is observed in some major Hindu shrines in India but the manner of observance of nine days car festivals in Puri is definitely distinct and most uncommon. Lord Jagannath is more known to the outside world through His famous Car Festival.

The most peculiar uniqueness of Jagannath lies in his Mahaprasad or the cooked holy foods offered to him. In a caste-ridden Hindu society, the Brahmans and priests are not allowed to take cooked food from others, But paradoxically the



Mahaprasad of the Lord is considered so sacred that even a staunch orthodox Brahman accepts it from the hands of a person belonging to the lowliest of the caste order. While the foods offered to all other Hindu deities are called Prasad, the same offered to the Lord Jagannath is known as Mahaprasad since it undergoes six type of purifications before it reaches the common devotee. The peculiar hearth (Chulla) in the kitchen of the Lord contains six openings symbolizing a Satkona Jantra. Nine earthen pots are placed at a time over such hearth representing a Navachakra Jantra, believed to have been prescribed according to the great Tantrik texts, Sarada Tilaka. Such elaborate procedure is nowhere followed for consecration of food offerings to the deities in Hindu temple. Even portions of the earthen containers of Mahaprasad are taken to remotest corners of India by Hindu pilgrims with the belief that very presence of the same in the house dispels all evil spirits.

Idol worship is an integral part of Hindu Religion. Agamas are described as the treatises of ceremonial rules dealing with such matters as the construction of temples, installation of idols therein and conducts of their worship. They contain the description of the figure of idols of different faiths, i.e. Shaiva, Sakta and Vaishnava. The worshippers of Shiva mainly follow Kanikagama, Karanagama, Maktagama and Supravedagama where as Vaishnavas follow Vaikhanasa and the Pancharatra Agama. The scholar have traced worship of idols in Temples by Hindus even in the 4th or 5th Century B.C.

Three main cults of Hinduism, i.e. Saiva, Sakta and Vaishnav developed separately into distinct cults. There was keen rivalry between the worshipper of Vishnu and Shiva to such an extent that the Mahabharat and some of the Puranas endeavourer to inculcate a spirit of synthesis by impressing that there is no difference between the two deities.

All the great Hindu shrines of India, are dedicated to one presiding deity or with His consort, as the celebrated Temple of Tirupati to Vishnu, Madurai to Goddess Meenakshi, Rameswaram to Shiva, Guruvayur to Vishnu, Kasi Viswanath to Siva, Kamakhya to Goddess Durga (Kamakhya) etc. but peculiarly and paradoxically to the injunctions of Agamas, the Temple of Jagannath contains four presiding deities, worshipped in four different Mantras though seated on the same platform.

The origin of the philosophy of the cult of Jagannath has so far baffled the scholars. Complicated process of religious and social interaction has made the cult more mystic. The Jagannath scholars have traced the traits of Tribalism, Jainism, Buddhism, Tantricism and Brahmanical Hinduism in the image of Lord Nrusingha, by equating Him with the tribal deity Neela Madhav, Jeena, Buddha, Dakshina Kalika, Krishna and Maha Vishnu.

From the iconographic features, German scholar A. Eschmann has come to the conclusion that the Jagannath is Nrusingha as follows :-

"A close scrutiny of the Jagannath image betrays that head is an attempt to represent lion head and its round eyes are the typical feature of Nrusingha's fury."

But Jagannath remained above and beyond the conventional conceptions of Hindu deities symbolizing all-in-one. In the words of famous historian William Hunter, the worship of Jagannath aims at Catholicism which embraces every form of Indian belief and every Indian conception of the deity.

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