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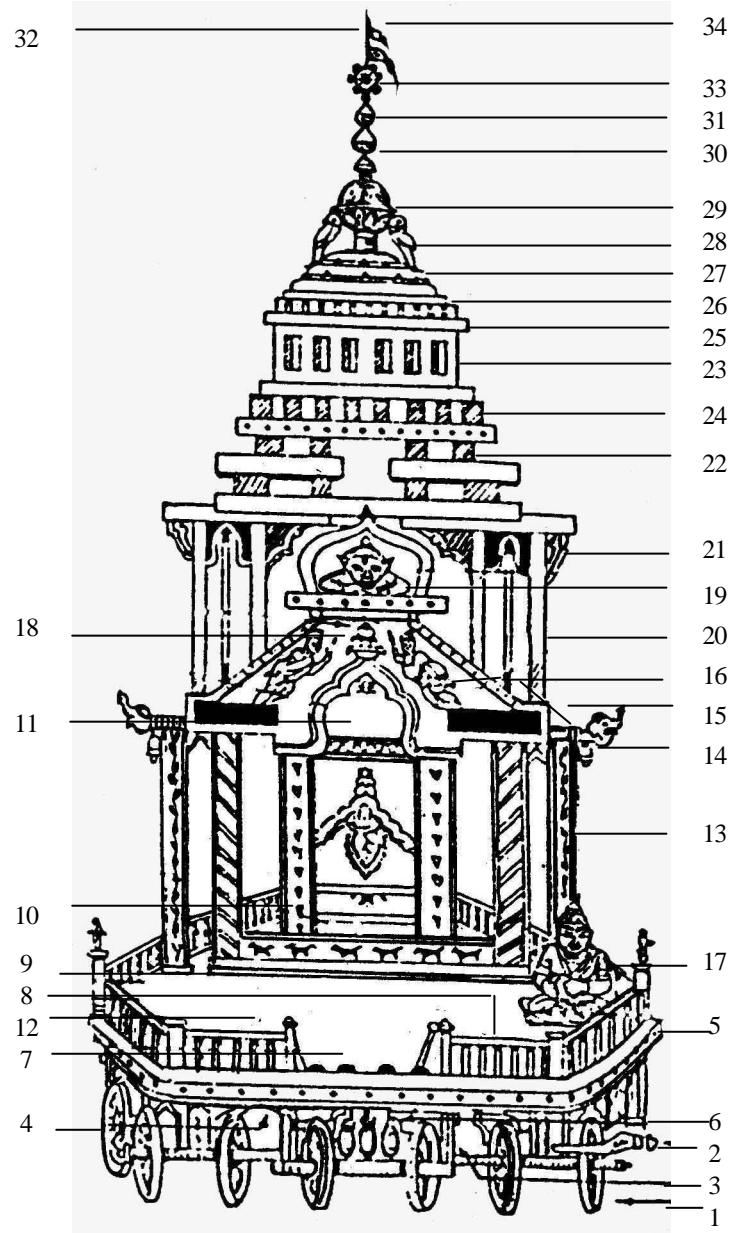


Jagannath Swami Nayana Pathagami Bhabatu Mein

THE PARTS OF A CHARIOT

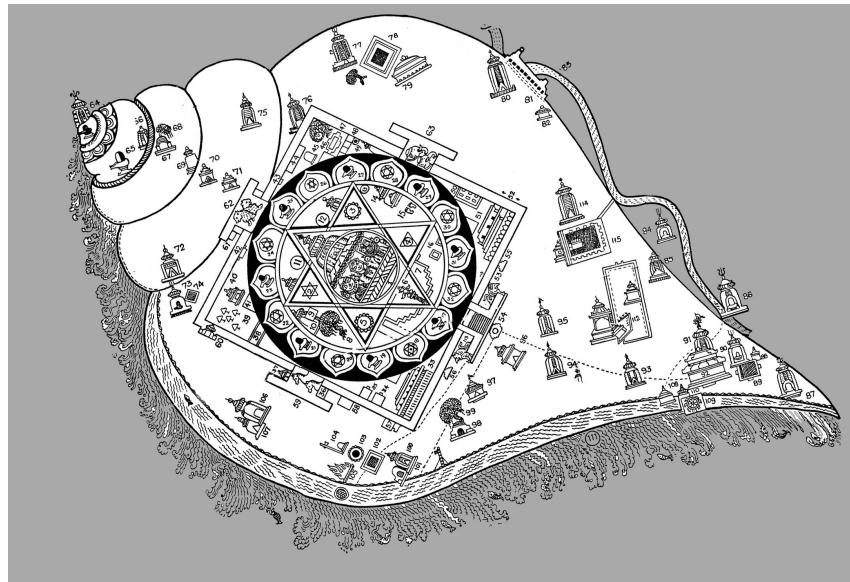
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- (1) Chaka or the wheels (2) Dandia (3) Ara (4) Banki (5) Hansa Pata (6) Kani (7) Sankha-dwara
(8) Jali (9) Gaipata (10) Singhasana (11) Kanak Mundai (12) Bhumi (13) Sola Nahaka (14) Makara
Danda (15) Basanta (16) Duar Ghoda (17) Sarathi Pida (18) Kumbha Pati (19) Rahu Pati
(20) Athanahaka (21) Banki (22) Pida (23) Rusi Pata (24) Danda (25) Para Bhadi (26) Khapuri
(27) Pada (28) Olata Sua (29) Dadhi Nauti (30) Kalasa (31) Kasthi (32) Danda (33) Chakra
(34) Copi Ketana or the flag.

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| 2. Khetreswari Vimala | 30. Yagnyaswari | 59. Dakhinadwar (S.gate) | 88. Siddha Hanuman |
| 3 Mahalaxmi | 31. Isaneswar | 60. Durgamadhava | 89. Indradyumna Teertha |
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Editor's Note



For ages, the Grand Temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri has been treated as one of the holy places of our country. It has commanded the reverence of pilgrims and scholars from around the world. Puri, also known as Purushottam Kshetra, has been acclaimed as one of the four Dhams of the country. Situated on the east coast of the country and overlooking the sea the huge temple of Lord Jagannath has been, through ages, transmitting the message of love, universal brotherhood and self perfection which comprises the highest goal of life. Jagannath cult is vivacious and greatest philosophy ever known to mankind. Lord Jagannath is a symbol and forever remains the message of love, truth and tolerance. The Rath Yatra is a grand culmination of a series of celebrations spread over summer and monsoon months. On the 2nd of bright fortnight of the month of Ashadha the deities come out of the temple in a spectacular procession called Pahandi. The deities adorned with Tahias are pulled in rhythmic moment to the beat of cymbals and chanting of the names of the holy Trinity in chorus by the devotees in frenzied ecstasy. After the deities are seated on Their respective chariots starts the Chhera Panhara by the Gajapati Maharaja. The most exciting part is the pulling of the chariots by lakhs of people along Bada Danda, the Grand Road. The chariots move slowly until they reach the Gundicha temple where the deities rest for a night adorned with Dasavatara costumes. They enter the Gundicha temple in the next day morning in the usual Pahandi style and stay there for 7 days. On the 10th day of bright fortnight of Ashadha, the return of chariots or the Bahuda Yatra takes place. The three chariots pulled by lakhs of devotees reach the Simhadwar. The next day the deities are attired in the costumes of glittering gold which is known as Sunabesha. After completion of certain rites on the Rath like "Adharapana", the deities go back to Ratna Simhasana on the Dwadashi day which is

popularly known as “Niladri Bije”. Their arrival to the sanctum sanctorum marks the end of Rath Yatra, the grand festival of chariots.

The whole world eagerly awaits the periodical renewal of the wooden body- divine of the deities named as Navakalevar to be held in 2015. According to Hindu Religion, the body is perishable and takes another form after death but the soul is immortal. Thus, the ceremony is unique in many respects in term of Hindu religious worship. It involves the total replacement of the images with new ones and the discarded images are given a divine burial in Koili Baikuntha in the precinct of Sri Jagannath temple. The Navakalevar ritual which is an important part of Jagannath consciousness exhibits a perfect balance between the tribal origin and Brahminic Hinduism. Each one is assigned a distinct duty in the multi formalities, performed during the ceremony. There is neither overlapping nor any possibility of encroachment by anyone over the other.

With the blessings of Lord Sri Jagannath, development is now tangible in Odisha. It is time, let us imbibe ourselves with the message of love, universal brotherhood, truth and tolerance transmitted to the world through Jagannath cult. For this wonderful issue on Car Festival, I express my heart-felt thanks to our Hon’ble Chief Minister, Hon’ble Minister, I & P.R., Principal Secretary, Director and the entire team of Information and Public Relations Department. My special thanks to esteemed writers of this issue including the Director, Odisha Government Press and his team for the efforts in bringing out this priceless publication.



Editor, Odisha Review



Daru Brahman - A Conceptual Reference in Bhagavad Gita

Prof. A.V.P.R. Rao

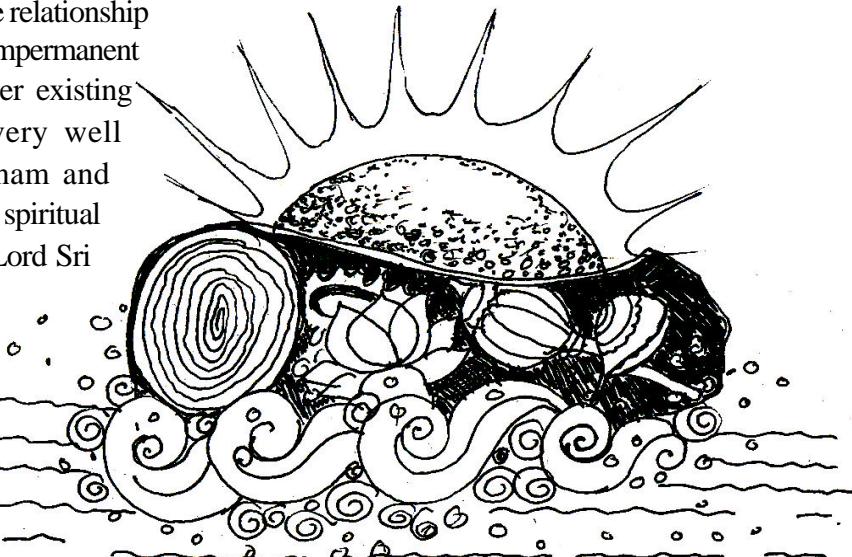
The secret of secrets of the relationship between ever changing impermanent Jagat and non-changing ever existing permanent Brahman is very well unfolded in Skanda Puranam and further taken the concept to spiritual heights by none other than Lord Sri Krishna in Bhagavad Gita. He teaches how a man in Spiritual path can realise Purushottam, a Gnana Purusha behind Daru Brahman. Daru Brahma Jagannath is none other than Lord Sri Jagannath. Let us discuss what Lord Sri Krishna says in the chapter XVth of Bhagavad Gita.

Lord Sri Krishna says,

*“Urdhv – mulam adhah sakham
Aswattam prahur avyayam
Chandam’si yasya Parnani
Yastam Veda sa veda vit”//*

(Sloka 1, Chapter XV, Bhagavad Gita)

The ancient scriptures speak of Eternal Aswattah. It is said that its roots are directed



upwards to heaven while its branches are spread in lower region. It is just contrary to ordinary tree. Its leaves represent Vedic hymns. It grows with the energy, derived through it roots from its trunk, known as Brahman. It is truly a tree of “Samsara”. Aswattah, as the name suggests does not last longer, so also Samsara /Jagat which is characterised with births and deaths. Smritis also say that Brahma is above. This mundane world derives energy from manifested Brahman (Hiranyagarbha).



2nd Sloka says:-

*"Adha'sc'ordhvam Prastras tasyas'akha
Guna-pravrdha visaya pravatah/
Adhas'ca mutany asusamtatani
Karm anubandhini manusya loka//.*

Aswattha tree is comparable to the Samsara/Jagat which, in turn represents the body, (sareera) of a man. Five Karmendriyas, (1) Sabdha (sound), represented by ears, (2) Sparsha (touch), represented by skin(3) Vasana (smell), represented by tongue, (4) Drushya (sight) represented by eyes and (5) Ruchi (taste) represented by tongue, and five Gnanedriyas, Viz; (1) Manas (2) Buddhi (3) Chittam (4) Aham(ego) and (5) Gnanam lead the man in the Samsara/Jagat through Karma. The Karma, in turn is determined by three Gunas, Satvic, Rajasika and Tamasika or combination of these in different proportions are embodied in vasanas/impressions that are acquired through various previous births. In a nut shell, at the micro level it is the three Gunas that nourish this Jagat of which the man is a part. The man, unlike Devatas and animals, has discrimination and hence he has a choice and can act according to his Gnanam.

Aswattha Vruksa which is a symbolic to Samsara goes on and on. Its parts, like leaves and branches may decay and again new ones come. But this tree lives long because of secondary roots which grow down the earth. So also Samsara goes on and on because of bondage (Bandhanam) which a man creates to himself through sense organs.

But a man can cut their Aswattha tree of Samsara with an axe of detachment to the pair of opposites like pain and pleasure. Such a person of detachment will not have doer ship and enjoyer ship. Having cut this tree of Samsara with an axe of detachment, he will find primeval person, who

is Purushottam from whom this never ending cosmic activity springs on and on.

A wise person among us who will be able to see Purushottam behind the tree of Samsara and because of whom everything in the Jagat sustain, is said to have attained Spiritual quantum level. Such a Spiritual quantum level is called Eternal state and such a wise person is called Eternal Person. For such an eternal Spiritual person, duality disappears.

Bhagavan Sri Krishna says:-

*Na tad, bhashyate surya
Na sasanka na pavakash*

(Sloka 6, XV of Gita)

At that eternal state of supreme nature, he shines himself without external source. He is the cause and also effect. He is both Nimitha karanam (eg. He is like potter of the pot) and also Upadhikaranam (eg. He is also creator of Upadhi of the pot).

Isa Upanishad says that there are two aspects of Brahman, Viz; Asambhuti/unmanifested Brahman and Sambhuti or manifested Brahman. According to Shri Adi Shankara, Asambhuti / unmanifested Brahman means “Prakriti” or “Maya” which is non-intelligent first cause of the universe in a state of equilibrium before creation. It is the seed of desire and work. Sri Krishna refers this Mayashakti as Akshara or imperishable (Sloka 16, Chapter XV of Gita). Upanishads say Maya is the source of all falsity and cause of endless Samsara. Maya and Ishwara make their presence at the same time. They are just object and shadow and hence imperishable. Maya is “Anadianantam”. It is beginningless, but has an end, because it vanishes once Gnanam prevails on Jiva. But Ishwara is “Anadianantam”. He is beginningless, and endless, i.e. infinite.



Contrary to Asambhati is Sambhuti. It is the quality of being born. It signifies Hiranyagarbha, the first manifestation of Brahman. According to Gita (sloka 16, Chapter XV) Sambhuti is perishable or Kshara. It is the cause of births and deaths. Lord Sri Krishna says :

*"Yasmat ksaram atito 'ham
Aksarad api C'ottamah/
Atosmi loke vede ca
Prathitah Purusottamah//"*

Upanishads and later Gita states that neither Hiranyagarbha (or sambhuti) is superior nor Maya / Asambhuti, but superior to these is "Gnana Purusha or Purushottam" or "Ishwara" whom Lord Sri Krishna in Gita claims himself to be one and the same.

Sri Bhagavan says,

*"Paritranaya Sadhunam vinasaya ca
dushkrutam Dharma samstha panarthaya
sambhavami yuge yuge"*

Thus Purushottam is Lord Sri Ram, Sri Krishna, Sri Jagannath etc., etc. He, who among men realises this, is also said to attain Moksha or salvation.

This is allegorical importance of Daru from which the wooden idols of Lord Sri Jagannath, Sri Balabhadra and Sri Subadra are carved out by Brahman himself in the guise of an old carpenter. There is only Swarupbheda between you and Ishwara. It should be remembered that Ishwara is "Mayopadhi visishta Chaitanya Shakti" which means, he is "absolute Chaitanya Shakti, enveloped by "Maya". Whereas man is "Avidyopadhi visishta Chaitanya Shakti" which means man is also Chaitanya Shakti, but enveloped by ignorance (Avidya) due to Maya. Man becomes deluded due to Maya. Ishwara uses Maya as an instrument to run the Jagat/ Samsara.

He who knows the role of Chaitanya Shakti and Maya simultaneously is none other than Purushottam. Realise this and contemplate this not once, but repeatedly to understand what is Darubrahma Jagannath.

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The History of Car Festival

Prabhat Kumar Nanda

Out of innumerable festivals celebrated in main temple of Lord Jagannath and side deities temples, the Car Festival has been considered as the most important festival. Till date more than 100 Jagannath temples have been constructed in foreign countries and the Car Festival is celebrated in 60 Jagannath temples. The other names of Car Festival i.e. Ratha Jatra, Shree Gundicha Yatra, Naba Dinatmaka Yatra, Patita Pabana Yatra, Ghosha Yatra, Mahabedi Yatra, the Dakshinabimukhi Yatra, Dasa Abatara Yatra, Adapa Yatra etc. have specific importance and philosophy related to the organization of Car Festival. Since Lord Jagannath proclaims to grant bliss to all devotees, it is named as Ghosha Yatra. The meaning of 'Ghosha' is to announce or proclaim publicly. Since Lord Jagannath leaves Grand Temple for 9 days and returns back after visiting Shree Gundicha temple it is also named as Nabadinatmaka Yatra. At the time of consecration of Jagannath temple, Queen Gundicha requested, Lord Jagannath to visit His birthplace i.e. Gundicha temple at least once in a year. Honouring the request of mother Gundicha, Lord Jagannath has been visiting Gundicha temple once in a year. Hence the name of the festival is Gundicha Yatra.

The Car festival is also called as Patitapaban Yatra. 'Patita' means downtrodden and 'Pabana' means to purify or to remove the



effects of sin. During Car Festival, devotees of all religions have the scope to view Lord Jagannath along with His brother, sister and weapon on chariots. As per administrative orders of the temple authority, only orthodox Hindus are permitted to enter the temple. In order to facilitate the view (Darshan), Lord Jagannath has been coming out of the Grand Temple to the Grand Road, to grant salvation to the devotees of all religions of the world. Hence it is called Patitapaban Yatra. Chariots move from the entrance point of Grand Temple towards northern side and return back from northern to southern direction to reach the Grand Temple. Hence the Festival is also named as Dakshinabhimukhi Yatra. The other name of Sanctum Sanctorum existing at Gundicha Temple is Adapa Mandap. Since Lord Jagannath stays during Car Festival on Adapa Mandap, the Festival is also named as Adapa Yatra. The religious rites for ten incarnations are observed during Car Festival and images of different incarnations of God are also installed at different chariots. Considering such importance, the festival is also called as Dasa



Abatara Yatra. Though the festival is named differently by scholars of various fields of Hindu Religion, mainly the festival is famous as Ratha Yatra i.e. Car Festival.

The celebration of Car Festival is an age old tradition in Odisha. The mention of the Car i.e. ‘Ratha’ is available in Rig Veda, Atharva Veda. Later such mention was observed in ‘Shatapatha Brahmana’, an important Sanskrit epic. All over the world, the movement of Sun God by a car has been established firmly. In Rig Veda, Sun has been accepted as a God of friendship (Mitra Debata). In due course of time many Gods and Goddesses were associated with Sun God and the movement of the chariot. Lord Sun has been accepted all over the world, as the source of energy. Primitive monks of India told stories of different incarnations and such were associated with chariots. In an island named as ‘Sisili’ of Europe, the Car Festival of Sun God is being celebrated from primitive period. The Car Festival of Sun God is also famous in India.

Different religious epics i.e. ‘Purana’ described about the importance of Car (Ratha) associated with different Gods and Goddesses. In ‘Bhabisyottara Purana’, it is mentioned that, ‘Prahlada’, the son of King Hiranya Kasipu had the privilege to draw the chariot of Maha Vishnu. There is also the mention of pulling chariot in ‘Padma’, ‘Skanda’ and ‘Bhabisya Purana’. Devotees of Vaishnavism were celebrating the Car Festival of Lord Vishnu at the end of rainy season and during the month of Kartik. The Chariot of Lord Krishna was vividly described in ‘Bhagabata’ and ‘Maha Bharata’. The Car Festival of Lord Shiba named as Lingaraj is famous in Odisha. During the summer season i.e. in the month of Baishakha, the Car Festival of Bhairab and Bhairabi are celebrated in Nepal. Mahadebi i.e. Supreme Goddess visits different places from bright third day to the full moon day

of the month of Kartik. Such has been vividly narrated in Debi Purana.

There are different thoughts about the initiation of Car Festival at Puri. Some scholars opine that, there was the importance of Car Festival in Buddha culture before the birth of Christ. The relics of Buddha were placed on Chariots and was taken to different areas for the propagation of Buddha religion. Some scholars strongly believed that, before consecration of Lord Jagannath at Puri, there was a Buddha temple. Lord Jagannath or Purusottama was placed after the removal of the relics of Buddha.

The Chinese pilgrim, Fahien has mentioned about Car Festival celebrated at Khotan during 5th Century A.D.. The description of the bathing ceremony is similar to the present Snanayatra i.e. bathing celebration. He also mentioned about the celebration of Car Festival during the months of Rainy season and the cleaning of the Cars by King of Purusottama Kshetra. Apart from India, the Buddha Religion also dominated Cylone (Sri Lanka) and China. Every year the tooth relic of Goutama Buddha is placed on elephant back and taken in procession to different area of the locality and is brought to the place of plenum. After keeping such relic for six days, again is returned back to the Grand Temple. The process of taking out Buddha Relic in procession and to return back after six days has much similarity with the Car Festival of Puri.

‘Madala Panji’, the chronicle maintained in Jagannath temple, reveals that, during 16th Century King Beera Narasingha Deba filled up the river flowing on the Grand Road with sand and facilitated the movement of three chariots from Grand Temple to Shree Gundicha temple. Earlier six chariots were constructed for movement from Grand Temple to Badasankha and then from other bank of the river to Gundicha temple. Some historians also opined that, the provision of three



chariots instead of six were introduced during the reign of King Langula Narasingha Deba i.e. from 1264 to 1278 A.D. There is the detailed description of Car Festival in the Utkal Chapter of ‘Skanda Purana’. Sri Bhikhari Patnaik one of the poets of Odisha composed a book named as “Ratha Chakda” narrating different aspects of Car. The book released during 1859 AD reveals that, King Jajati Keshari of 8th and 9th Century was celebrating Car Festival at Purusottam Kshetra. As per such description, length of the chariot of Lord Jagannath was 48 hands, the idol height was of two hands and ten fingers. The height of chariot was eight hands. All the chariots were of same height. Six chariots were constructed during the period of King Jajati Keshari. After reaching Balagandi, the idols in three chariots were taken by boats to the other bank of the river Malini and then were taken by boats to the other bank of the river and then Idols were taken to Gundicha temple by other three chariots. The river was also called as Badanai.

The number of wheels of chariots were sixteen, fourteen and twelve as that of today for Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Debi Subhadra respectively. The chariots used from the bank of river Malini to Gundichia temple were like big carts having four wheels. The areas from Grand temple to Balagandi is named as Badadanda, whereas the area from other bank of the river Malini to Gundicha temple is named as Sharadhabali. Some historians mentioned about the rule of King Parsu Keshari. He ruled for two years but could not organize car festival due to torrential rains. Some historians opined that, Chola Ganga Deba constructed the temple having 125 hands height. The chariot was of 32 hands high as idols were of miniature size. Chariots were pulled by six elephants. Six chariots were constructed during such period. Apart from elephants, the king and his royal servants were also pulling the chariot. For the construction of

chariots a group of skilled carpenters named ‘Rathakar’ were invited by the King Raghaba Deba and settled them at Chudangasahi of Madhupurpatana. Dr. Neelakanta Mishra, a celebrated historian of Odisha, enunciated that Madhabacharya, Baisnaba scholar visited Shreekshetra during 1270 AD and condemned the provision of six chariots for the movement of idols from Grand Temple to Gundicha temple. As per his opinion once idols are placed in specific chariots, should not get down till reaching the destination. He considered it as an unreligious activity. King Bhanu Deba-I, son of Ananga Bheema Deba filled up the river Malini with sand during the period from 1264 to 1278 AD. The above statement appears to be correct as has been accepted by number of scholars of Jagannath culture.

Poet Murari Mishra of 9th century AD mentioned in his Sanskrit drama “Ananga Raghaba” that, a specific Car Festival was organized at Puri for the pleasure of Lord Jagannath. Historian Dr. Satyanarayan Rajguru, one of the celebrated historians of Odisha mentioned that, the Car Festival has introduced from 1223 AD. Another historian Kedarnath Mohapatra has also opined about the celebration of Car Festival from 12th century A.D. Irrespective of different data and dates as available in historical records, it is undisputed that Car Festival of Shreekshetra is the most import festival of the world, glorifying the culture of Lord Jagannath i.e. Patitapabana, the savior of the downtrodden people on the earth.



Antiquity of Jagannathism

Dr. Saroj Kumar Panda



Jagannath cult is very ancient and it can be traced back to Vedic times. Atharvaveda contains the word 'Daru' meaning the deity made of wood. We come across the word 'Purushottama' on the Matsya Purana and it is ascribed to the close of the 3rd century A.D. In Tantra Jamala, it is noted that Jagannath is made of wood. Tantra Jamala which is mentioned in Kurmapurana assigned to 4th century A.D. or earlier period. In 'Rudra Jamala Tantra' also we come across the name 'Jagannath' twice. In the Skanda, Brahmanda and Siva Puranas, there are detailed accounts of Jagannath Kshetra. Those are comparatively later in age and assigned to the 7th century at the earliest.

Jagannath was the representative of the Savaras as described in the mythology. The Savaras are mentioned in the post-Vedic literature. They were the original inhabitants of Odisha. When the Aryans came, they had to face these animist Savaras. Gradually the Savaras of the plain region were Aryanised and the outcome was a mixed race. The Non-Aryan Savaras followed their own faith in the Jungle and hilly tracts. It is probable that Jagannath was the cult image of the Savaras. With the advent of Buddhism and Jainism, the foundation of the Aryan cult was shaken. In order to counteract the popularity of those faith and enlist the goodwill of the Savaras,

their god was Aryanised and taken into the fold of the Brahminical deities.

The Savaras in South Odisha still worship wooden poles with eyes and mouth. The goddess Hingula of the Savaras in Talcher is but a piece of stone. That the object of totemic worship is everywhere crudely shaped limbless queer figures designed more for inspiration of awes than for devotion all over the world. According to tradition the *suaras* of the Puri temple who are engaged in cooking and the *Daita* priests are descendants of the Savaras.

Many scholars are of opinion that Jagannath was a Buddhist deity. According to them, the three deities (Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra) are representatives of the *Tri Ratna* (Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha) of the Buddhist. Even now Jagannath is decorated in Buddha Vesha on full-moon day of *Baishaksha*. As regards traces left by the Buddhism in the cult of Jagannath, some scholars take the car festival as the reminiscent of the Buddhist ceremony. Jayadeva, the famous Vaishnava lyric poet described Buddha as the 9th incarnation of Vishnu. It may be pointed out here that as controversy is going on now-a-days in the state that in the ten incarnations of Vishnu, inscribed in the gate way of the Jagannath temple of Puri, Buddha, the 9th incarnation has been replaced by Jagannath image. It is same and nothing to be confused.



Sun worship was prevalent in Odisha dating back to 6th century B.C. or so and that Jagannath was probably a solar deity in the beginning. During the Saiva regime, Sun worship flourished in the then Odishan Capital Jajpur. In the 11th century the Sun Temple at Konark drew attention of the masses and it attained gradually more and more celebrity during the period of Vaishnava ascendancy reaching its culmination in the 13th century A.D.. Thus sun worship laid the foundation of Vaishnava Jagannathism. During this time Jagannath might have undergone a corresponding change from a solar deity to Vaishnava deity. Besides, in the Vedas there is mention of sun's car (chariot). In fact, the car festival of Lord Jagannath owe's its origin to this *surya's* car from very ancient times and has always remained associated with it.

Jagannath might have been identified with Krishna Vasudeva from about the 2nd century A.D. Bhagavata cult came into prominence under the Gupta Kings in the 4th-5th century A.D. Chandragupta II, Kumargupta and Skandagupta styled themselves as 'Parama Bhagavata' in their coins. The emblems of Garuda and Laxmi are found in their official records. So, Bhagavatism was emerged to the status of state religion under them. Odisha was within the pale of Gupta civilization and culture. With the development of Bhagavatism, necessity of Sankarshan must have been felt. Thus, Balaram might have been added to lonely Jagannath-cum-Basudeva by 5th century A.D. Later on Subhadra was added as *Shakti* of Basudev in the 7th century A.D. Probably she took the place of Laxmi in Vaishnavism. Some scholars say the addition of Balabhadra and Subhadra to Jagannath took place simultaneously in the 5th century A. D. when Bhagavatism had been fully developed. It will appropriate here to mention that the worship of Trinity together is perhaps unique in universe.

The Trinity- Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra have been variously conceived as being the symbols of various *principles*. Some say that they represent Vishnu, Shiva and Durga that is Vaishnavism, Saivism and Shaktism. Others hold that they are Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma, symbolizing the creative, destructive and preserving principles. Many said that, they represent the principles *kling*, *hling* and *sling* etc. Balaram Das portrayed them as Rama, Laxman and Sita.

Lord Jagannath originating from among the primitive deities of the aboriginal people has slowly but steadily forged his way upwards through ages reaching the pinnacle of glory and greatness in the 16th century assuming the role of Lord of the universe. He bears proudly today as the positive proof of his universal love and all-embracing creed. Today he stands as the great Lord of Nilachala, as the representative of all the cults that originated and flourished in India in different ages from the dawn of civilization right up to the modern times. Such is Lord Jagannath Whom people from all parts of India even of world offer their heart full devotion and annually assembled in millions in the holy city of Puri to wash away their accumulated sins of years by only view of Him.

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Lord Jagannath : The Revered God of Bliss

Parikshit Mishra

It's epistemologically abstract transcendental. Thinkers, philosophers, poets, saints, seers, historians and learned pundits over the ages have endeavoured to rightly interpret the subtlety of the great Jagannath philosophy which establishes its divine precept. The creed encompasses love, compassion, pardon, tolerance glorifying peace and non-violence unless terribly provoked. Lord Jagannath is the incarnator. He was Narasingh (Man-lion) in Satya Yuga to demolish Hiranyakashipu violently emerging from a pillar to save his endeared devotee Prahalad.

In Dwapara Yuga Lord Krishna killed the terrorist and oppressive ruler Kansa and other demons. He demonstrated that the sovereign power of Almighty was invincible. The holy Bhagabat succinctly sang: "The world is a pastime of god. The living beings are in his grips."

The pilgrims throng the Sankha or Purusottam Kshetra for the attainment of spiritual

joy while trying to understand the mystery of the decent of Lord Jagannath, his elder brother Lord Balabhadra, sister goddess Subhadra and Sudarshan in the present form from the holy Daru or wood log after the disappearance of Lord Nilamadhav in a severe sandstorm even as king Indradyumna was on his way for a holy Darshan.

Shankar(700-750AD), Sanskrit scholar, philosopher, theologian who went round the whole of India in his short life established four Hindu shrines, one of them at Nilachal Puri. He spent time here eulogizing the Lord. The present majestic

temple was built by the Ganga dynasty. The construction work commenced during the reign of Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva(1112-1148 AD) and was completed in the first half of the 12th century by Anangabhima Dev.

Ramanuja(1417-1137AD) was an eminent philosopher and theologian. He was a Vishnu worshipper. He founded a Mutt at Puri.





He had mastered the Vedas and put importance on devotion towards god. In his assessment, the Bhagavad Gita and Brahma-sutra made no distinction between the phenomenal, and the real world, the Jagannath philosophy is held in highest esteem.

Acharya Ganapati Bhatta was a staunch believer of Lord Ganesh. When he visited Puri, prayed before Lord Jagannath in 1432 AD, he perhaps was dismayed in the form of the holy idols and could not see his beloved Ganesh. The Lord who dwells in every heart could listen to the silent longing of Bhatt. On the full-moon day of May-June the holy idols were brought to the bathing altar in a colourful procession called *pahandi* donning exquisite crown of grass, holy basil, flowers, twigs woven with bambos stripes called *tahia*. After the bathing rituals the aggrieved Acharya was amazed to witness the idols in beautiful elephant outfit. Now his cherished desire was fulfilled, he pronounced that Lord Jagannath was his god and was a unison of all faiths.

Superyogi Sri Aurobindo(1872-1950) was a philosopher, nationalist, spiritualist and an erudite. He founded an Ashram at Pondicherry and had followers the world over. He reached thereafter taking part in the freedom movement. He was also a poet of eminence and his epic Savitri is pure metaphysical not easily comprehensible by all. Sri Aurobindo said a model society of the amalgamation of human conscience has four wheels of the car(the Rath) of Lord Jagannath. They are unity, freedom, knowledge and power. The Lord's car (Rath) Nandighosh has sixteen wheels but Sri Aurobindo's observation is incisive in upholding the sovereignty of the Jaganath cult.

Saint Chaitanya, unwavering devotee of Lord Krishna came to Puri in 1510 from Nabadwip by foot chanting the sacred name of

Sri Krishna. On his way he visited holy places and temples at Jaleswar, Remuna, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Bhubaneswar and Sakshigopal of Odisha. He spread Bhakti movement and had total allegiance in Lord Jagannath. He sang and danced repeating God's name with his disciples in Badadanda. It was Hare Krishna Hare Ram. Some onlookers and servitors frowned upon and even called him insane which was later rectified and his sainthood was recognised. Pandit Jagannath Das, the composer of Odia Bhagabat was convinced of the greatness of Sri Chaitanya. He was initiated by Chaitanya as Vaishnab. Both of them were having regular holy Darshan of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Maa Subhadra in inner sanctum. Chaitanya was believed to be an incarnate of Srikrishna. He conferred Atibadi title on Jagannath Das. He stayed at Puri from July 1515 to 23 June 1533, the day he departed to his heavenly abode.

Saint Kabir(1440-1518) a weaver by profession believed that the essence of all religions was one. He composed metaphysical poems. He was critical of idol-worship, liturgy and rituals, but was in accord with the notion of reincarnation and believed in one's availing the fruit of Karma. He also believed in monotheism and egalitarianism.

Guru Nanak(1469-1539) born a Hindu, founded Sikhism. Earlier he resigned his job, renounced his family, travelled various places, attracted disciples and became the first Guru of the Sikhs. He was proponent of meditation for realisation of salvation. At Srikshtera monks, saints and seers of different sects and hues found harmony and adored Sri Jagannath.

To the believers Lord Jagannath is a living god. The ultimate destination of Sanatan Hindu Dharma is Moksha, spiritual freedom. Most acclaimed modern Indian philosopher Dr.S



Radhakrishnan in his book "Indian Religious thought" wrote, " Moksha or spiritual freedom is the aim of all human life. It is the destiny of man to reach the summits of spirit and attain immortality. We are children of God, amrutasya putrah. The eternal dream of human heart, the aspiration of the soul to come to its own, is the basis of the Hindu Dharma." This is also what the Jagannath philosophy professes. The Jagannath ideology calls upon people, sinners and saints alike, with no material desire, to surrender resolutely to Him for salvation. He is the deliverer of the fallen as all mortals are powerless, frail, fragile and weak. The belief draws strength and makes life liveable.

A devotional poet Bikram Narendra sings:

*Glory to Jagannath the consort of Laxmi
Who takes rest at the sea of milk
Whose bed is Anant cobra
And conch wheel mace lotus
adorn his hands.*

The faithful poet pours out his heart singing full-throated songs in admiration of God.

In Tulsi Ramayan saint Tulasi Das, metaphysical poet and life long adherent of SriRama wrote one had to worship Lord Shiva to achieve worldly fruits and gain all time devotion of holy feet of Sri Rama. He was an unparalleled devotee of Sri Rama. He wrote

"Shiva seva karaiha phala bhai
Abirala Rama charan bhakti hoi."

While you enter Sri Mandira through Singhadwar(lion-gate) you first meet Patitpaban idol installed during Rama Chandra Dev's time and pay obeisance in the Gumut. You worship Lord Kasi Viswanath, in southern corner base of the 22steps. Thereafter you go half way up to

Bata Ganesh and Kalpabata and other deities before making it to Garuda Stambha for holy Darshan of the trinity manifested on the jewelled altar called Ratna Singhasan.

Within Sri Mandir premises you are free to visit other temples apart from the main 214ft lofty temple where the trinity, Lord Sudarshan, Sridevi, Bhudevi, Ramakrishna and other gods dwell. Sight of faithful praying, singing, dancing, beseeching, shedding tears of love and sorrow is not uncommon. Everyone seeks boon, untrammelled joy and bliss. From early morning when the gates are open to the late night when the gates are closed it is imperative that rituals, which are too many, are observed precisely in keeping with the sacrosanct ancient tradition. This is one of the holiest places where the air, water and earth are sacred and your mind is occupied with nothing but pious thought of god. Your experience is ecstatic, sublime and joyous as it is god's spiritual world. Glory to Lord Jagannath.

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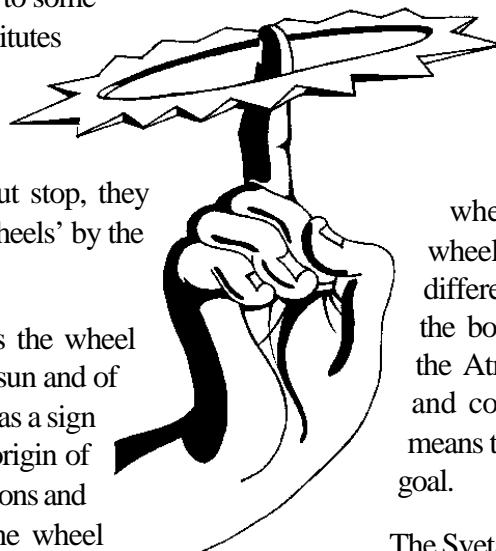


Chakra, The Symbol of Eternity and Sudarshan Chakra

Dr. Srinivas Acharya

Chakra, as an expression of infinity and ultimate truth, is intimately connected with the spiritual and cultural life of India from time immemorial. This is the symbol that has found an important place in the mythologies of many nations. In our ancient religious literature, particularly Vedic, Tantric, Buddhist and to some extent, Yogic the wheel constitutes a mystic symbol of esoteric and secret doctrines. As the sun, time and life ever continue to move on without stop, they were allegorically termed 'wheels' by the ancient people.

The Rig Veda treats the wheel primarily as a symbol of the sun and of time and in a few references, as a sign of sovereign authority. The origin of the later symbolic representations and allegorical expressions of the wheel can be traced back to Rig Vedic concepts. The word 'Chakra' means turning or revolving and is derived from the roots car, cak or kram, all meaning 'to move'. Thus it means that whichever moves forward or rolls on unchecked or a thing that pervades. Chakra is allegorically applied to time which never stops and the sun with its never-ceasing movement.



The wheel of the sun is described in the Vedas as golden which Indra steals and throws against the demons of darkness at the decline of day or night. (RV. 1.130.9.). Besides the Sun, Soma, Pusana, Marutas and Asvins are said to possess wheels in the Rig Veda.

The nervous centres in our body which are the potential sources of vitality for development of energy and spiritual power are termed as wheels by the mystics and these wheels or centres are concealed in the different parts of our body. For them, the body is only a vehicle driven by the Atman mounted on these wheels and constitutes only a medium or a means to achieve or attain their ultimate goal.

The Svetasvatara Upanishad describes in detail what it calls a revolving Brahmachakra or Samsarachakra which is being caused to revolve by the greatness of God. The Upanishad further says that the Hamsa (Jivatman) flutters about in the Brahmachakra which vitalises all things and also appears in all things. This merry-go-round Jivatman, we are told, attains immortality by escaping from this ever revolving



Brahmachakra and attains Moksha when he realizes that Jivatman and Isvara are one and not different and when the supreme soul favours him with his blessings.

The Yoga Upanishads generally speak of the six mystic Chakras such as Muladhara, Swadhistana, Manipura, Anahata, Visuddha and Ajna besides the Sahasrara which is thousand-spoked.

The Mahabharat advises one to be aware of the Kalachakra and try to understand it properly and then throw it away, that is, escape from its rotation, the unending chain of repeated existence, also mentions another wheel from which it does not ask one to run away but turn it and then through it reach the ultimate goal from where one never returns.

In Buddhist literature we find the concept of the wheel of Dharma which is found in Buddha's sermons in Varanasi. 'The spokes of the wheel are the rules of pure conduct; justice is the uniformity of their length; wisdom is the time; modesty and thoughtfulness are the hub in which the immovable axle of truth is fixed.' Buddhism, later, gave wider currency to symbolism of the wheel by incorporating all the above ideas and making it a household word for Buddhists. There is the Bhavachakra with twelve *nidanas*, such as *jaramarana, jati, bhava, upadana, trisna, vedana, sparsa, sadayatana, namarupa, vijnana, samskara* and *avidya* described in the Buddhist canons. These twelve *nidanas* are believed to be the main causes for the transmigration of the soul or the repetition of birth and death. One who wants to escape from this wheel should destroy these *nidanas* and, ultimately the *bhavachakra* as well.

Chakra as a circle has neither beginning nor end, and in value it is infinite. It is, in plain, a

sign of eternity, completeness (purnata), continuity and incessant progress, and above all, in Buddhism particularly, it is a divine symbol of eternal Doctrine, the Dharma of the "Middle Path" which leads to insight, supreme wisdom and Nirvana.

Sudarshan Chakra, the King of Wheels

Origin of Sudarshan Chakra- The Vishnu Purana contains the following story about the origin of Chakra.

Suryadev (The Sun God) married Samjna, daughter of Visvakarma. But, due to the insufferable heat of her husband the marital life of Samjna became miserable, and so she requested her father to lessen the heat of Surya. And accordingly Visvakarma ground Surya on a grinding machine and thus diminished only 1/8 of that effulgence, which glowing red-hot dropped on the earth, and with that Visvakarma made the Sudarshana Chakra, the Trishula, the Puspakavimana and the weapon called Sakti. Out of those four things the Trishula came to be possessed by Siva, the Puspakavimana by Kubera and Shakti by Brahma. The Sudarshan Chakra which was glowing like anything was deposited in the sea. (Visnu Puran, Part-3 Chapter-2). There is a story in the Mahabharata as to how the Chakra thrown into the sea came into possession of Mahavishnu. While Srikrishna and Arjuna were in a picnic on the shores of the Yamuna, Agnideva went to them and requested them to give Khandava forest to him for food. As Taksaka, friend of Indra, was living in the forest the latter was causing heavy rains to fall there. Krishna and Arjuna realized the fact that Agni would be able to consume the forest only after subjugating Indra. But, how to manage it ? Then Agni said that he would supply the weapon to fight Indra with, and accordingly he meditated on Varuna, who presented to him (Agni) a chariot



and flag with monkey as symbol, a quiver which would never become empty of arrows (Akshaya Tunira), a bow called Gandiva and the Sudarshan Chakra. Agnidev gave the Chakra to Srikrishna and the other things to Arjuna. (M.B. Adiparva, Chapter 297.)

Regarding the creation of Sudarshan Chakra it is stated in the Brahmapurana that in order to get rid of the cruel and wicked demons all gods prayed Vishnu. He asked all gods to combine all their energies. God Shankar shaped this combined energy into a wheel. He handed over this wheel to Mahavishnu to kill demons.

Sudarshan Chakra as a weapon or Ayudha signs in the right hand of Vishnu, therefore he is known as 'Chakri' and 'Chakradharin'. Sudarshan Chakra is regarded as a deity in our scriptures. The four deities on the Ratnasinghasan of Srimandir, - Sri Jagannath, Sri Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Sri Sudarshana are known as Chaturddhamurthi in general. Here the shape of Sri Sudarshan is like a pole. Both the wheel and pole shapes of Sri Sudarshana have different mythological back-grounds. The-Chakraudha of Sri Jagannath is made of Gold.

Sri Sudarshana is worshipped as the deity of energy and power. He gets the Ajnamala from Sri Jagannath and as the representative arrives at

Gamhabedi on the full moon day of Shravana to perform birth rites of Sri Balabhadra in the Markandeswar temple premises.

Sudarshana, the king of wheels stands at the top of Sreemandira is known as Neelachakra. The magnificent temple of Sri Jagannath presents an imposing sight and can be seen from miles away through its Neelachakra and Patitapabana is 11ft. 8" and which is an amalgamation of eight different metals. Neelachakra has circles, one is at the centre and the other is the outer. There are eight bars which connect the inner and the outer circle both. Srimad Bhagabadgeeta reveals the mystery of the eight bars. The eight bars represent eight factors of the nature. God Srikrishna says that earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, reason and also the ego- these constitute his nature eightfold divided.

Neelachakra is the supporter of the Patitapaban Banner. Those who are unable to come and not allowed to enter into the temple they witness it from outside to get the benefit of seeing Sri Jagannath. Neelachakra attracts pilgrims, saints, sages over the ages.

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Shree Jagannath and Maa Laxmi

Durga Madhab Dash



The words, “Laxmi” and “Mahalaxmi” have one and the same meaning as described in the Vedas. As also commonly understood, the words are synonymous with the concept of happiness and prosperity in life. In the Rig Veda, the word, “Laxmi” is described as a primordial divine force of the cosmic creation. Laxmi is also portrayed as the symbol of delusion. She is adored as the cause of the divine procreation. In Yajurveda, She is referred to as Devi-incarnate on earth. She is depicted as a symbol of energy and plentifullness. In Atharba Veda, Mahalaxmi is described as “Sri” and the causative divine force of goodness in life. In Saptasati- Chandi, Devimata is described and worshipped in the forms of Mahalaxmi, Maha Saraswati and Mahakali. Mahalaxmi is portrayed as a divine force representing the all-pervading “Mayasakti” of Lord Narayan. It is stated in this connection that without Mahalaxmi, the preservation of the universe is not actually possible.

In the Grand Temple, Puri, the deity of Mahalaxmi has a different significance. In the “Shastras” the Grand Temple is also known as “Srimandir”. “Sri” means Laxmi; which means that the Grand Temple at Puri is also known and adored as the temple of Mahalaxmi. As described in the “Shastras” on Jagannath Culture, it is



Mahalaxmi who prepares the ‘Prasad’ offered to the deities seated on the divine altar of the sanctum of the Grand Temple.

There is a separate temple in the Grand Temple, Puri belonging to Mahalaxmi. She is separately worshipped here with the daily offerings differently prepared. At a different place in same temple, she is seen as sitting on the lap of Nrusingha which means that Nrusingha is another form of Lord Narayan. Thus seen, Mahalaxmi is worshipped in Sri Mandir as a positive divine force and as a symbol of material and spiritual prosperity. She is also worshipped as a symbol of good fortune and joyous dispensation in life.



There are seven deities on the divine platform of “Srimandir” and Mahalaxmi is one among them. Of the seven deities, the images of Sri Balabhadra, Devi Suvadra, Sri Jagannath, Sri Sudarshana and Sri Madhav are made of Neem-wood. The images of the other two deities namely Bhudevi and Sridevi are made of a precious metal. Here, Sridevi represents Mahalaxmi, Who is worshipped as the main deity of ‘Srimandira’. Her image actually adds to the lustre of the spiritual surrounding. The devotees, who visit the temple to worship Lord Jagannath and the other deities, first offer adulations to Mahalaxmi in Her prominent temple. This is because Mahalaxmi is the Mayasakti of Lord Jagannath. She is worshipped in the temple in Her Vidya-Maya form.

As described in the “Mahabharat,” a popular scripture of the Hindus written by Vyasa, Mahalaxmi as a divine force symbolizes the Bibhuti of long life tinged with the divine qualities of spiritual well-being and material prosperity in life. The author has emphasized these divine qualities in reference to the life of Duryodhana as a blessed devotee of Mahalaxmi. Vyasadeva has described in this scripture that Duryodhan enjoyed all these qualities in his life as long as Mahalaxmi was seated on his shoulders. He met his downfall and breathed his last in the battlefield of Kurukshetra when he rose to the sinful height of avowed injustice shorn of compunction and penitence in his royal dispensation. This state of life in the ‘Shastras’ is known as “Laxmichhada” i.e a state of life bereft of Mahalaxmi’s benign protection.

Similarly, as described in the Ramayana written by Sage Valmiki, the demise of Ravana could only be possible after he was estranged from the divine blessings of Devi Mata which also includes Mahalaxmi in one of Her incarnated forms on the earth.

In Laxmipurana, it is stated that Sri Jagannath and Sri Balabhadra had become ‘Laxmi Chhada’ when They were estranged from the sympathy and the loving care of Mahalaxmi. They got back their divine lustre only after they gained the loving care of Mahalaxmi. This episode overwhelms the readers when they read Laxmipurana written by Balaram Das. Laxmipurana is based on a spiritual story which runs as follows:-

Maa Laxmi is the divine consort of Lord Jagannath. As stated above, She is the Maya Shakti(the power of delusion) of the Lord. She is very sprightly in her divine appearance. But She is very quick and brisk in Her nature. In no place, She likes to stay long. Importantly, She gets impressed and unimpressed in quick succession.

Hindu women observe this spiritual ritual on every Thursday in the month of Margasira every year. This ritual is known as “Mana Basa Gurubar”. This is observed for the prosperity of the family and the long life of the family members. It is described in Laxmipurana that Mahalaxmi on every such occasion moves along to the places of Her devotees in quick succession and offers Her blessings to the devotees where She is immensely pleased with their devotion.

As stated in Laxmipurana, on one such occasion, Mahalaxmi visited the house of low caste woman known as Shriya Chandaluni. She was performing the ritual with utmost devotion. Getting up very early in the morning, she had daubed her place with cow-dung water and painted the floor of her cottage with different designs in rice-water known as “Jhoti”. Mahalaxmi visited her place in course of Her spiritual rounds. She was immensely pleased with Shriya’s devotion and good spiritual behavior. As a mark of satisfaction, She blessed Shriya with prosperity in material gains.



Shri Balaram, the elder brother of Lord Jagannath, did not approve of Mahalaxmi's action. She did not approve of Mahalaxmi visiting the cottage of a low-caste woman. He directed Jagannath not to allow Mahalaxmi to enter the temple on Her return. At this, Shri Jagannath was greatly flabbergasted. He did not expect this sort of behavior from his brother. He was helpless at that moment. Feeling abandoned, He had to carry out the instructions of His brother.

When Mahalaxmi returned, She learnt everything from Her maidens. She did not approve of the disposition of Her consort and also his elder brother. At last, Sri Jagannath and His brother became the victims of Mahalaxmi's anger. Mahalaxmi deserted the temple and the two brothers were deprived of the oblations in the temple as Mahalaxmi was not present in the Grand Temple to cook Their "Prasad".

At last the two brothers left the Temple. In disguise, They begged from door-to-door. Deprived of Their divine lustre, They were looked down upon by the people. Nobody gave them any offering. They had to go without food for several days. Even They were deprived of water from the public wells. At some places, people chased Them and threatened them with dire consequences. They didn't approve of the two brothers begging as They looked quite healthy and able to earn Their living by working as labourers. Shorn of other details on this score, later They came to the temple due to the compassion of Mahalaxmi. Thereafter, They were properly looked after by Mahalaxmi but by then, They had realized Their mistakes.

"Mana-basa-Gurubar" is a very famous ritual among Hindu women. Laxmipurana eulogizes the divine compassion of Mahalaxmi as the only divine source of everybody's good fortune and prosperity. This also establishes the

idea that Mahalaxmi loves the devotion of Her worshippers, irrespective of caste. So, caste is no barrier in any ritualistic practice of Hindu religion, particularly in the propitiation of goddess Mahalaxmi. This eclectic attitude prevails upon the service-pattern of Jagannath Temple where the devotees irrespective of caste partake of the Mahaprasad of Lord Jagannath together.

Mahalaxmi is the Alhadini-Sakti of Lord Jagannath. She is always seated in His heart. When the Lord is absent from the Grand Temple during Ratha Yatra, Mahalaxmi is worried in Her behavioral disposition. On one occasion, She comes out of the Grand Temple during Ratha Yatra function and meets the Lord in the Gundicha Temple. She makes an appeal to Him to return to Srimandir early. On another occasion during this period, She again meets the Lord in His chariot in front of the palace of Gajapati Maharaj. This divine meet is popularly known as Laxmi-Narayan Bhet. Here again, Mahalaxmi welcomes the Lord to the Grand Temple without further loss of time.

There is another aspect of this spiritual story. This reveals that when the Lord after completion of the Yatra returns to the Grand Temple after alighting from His chariot, Mahalaxmi, overpowered by Her vanity as the supreme goddess of the temple, does not allow the Lord to enter the sanctum although His elder brother Balaram and younger sister Subhadra were already inside the temple. For some time, they had aspersions and counter aspersions. In course of exchange of Their accusing remarks, Mahalaxmi at last states "Prabhu, you will have to now make a pledge that in future, you will not move out of the temple. And, unless you make a commitment in this order, you won't be allowed into the sanctum." That was an unusual demand from the side of Mahalaxmi.



Mahaprabhu states very politely “Bhadre, I am bound by a divine commitment to my devotees. I give public audience to countless fallen devotees at least once a year. So this sojourn of mine is known as Patitapaban Yatra. You also visit your devotees on all Thursdays during the month of Margasir every year. And you should also take my sojourn during Ratha Yatra in that spirit.” With this argument, Mahaprabhu at last convinces Mahalaxmi. This is an irrefutable submission of the Lord to Mahalaxmi. In context of the Lord’s pleadings, Mahalaxmi has no other go than to accept His viewpoint. Mahalaxmi finally opens the door of the sanctum and Jagannath goes inside. This is an important ritual of the temple.

This ritual has an important sociological significance. This emphasizes the efficacy of an impeccable relationship between a wife and a husband in the usual course of their life. A wife has a right to misunderstand her husband if the latter plans out a programme meaning a longtime absence from home although in the company of his own brother and sister. There should be no iota of misunderstanding between a wife and her husband in any social or filial matter. This is the whole idea behind this episode. The cult of Jagannath reveals the implication of this ideology in reference to our day-to-day life. This is an important aspect of Jagannath Culture.

As stated earlier, there is a separate temple for goddess Mahalaxmi on the premises of the Grand Temple. This is an important landmark in the history of Vaishnavism in Odisha. The emergence of Jagannath religion has virtually coincided with the emergence of Laxmi worship in the Grand Temple, Puri. There have developed in this respect a series of legends and religious myths which highlight Mahalaxmi as the presiding goddess of the Grand Temple. It is believed that

construction of the Mahalaxmi Temple dates back to 9th century AD. Mahalaxmi was thereafter worshipped in the iconic form as the presiding goddess of the temple. Adored as the goddess of fortune, affluence and prosperity, She was later worshipped in every Hindu household in Utkal Pradesh. This ritual is now followed as an important Hindu worship in every nook and corner of Odisha.

The image of Mahalaxmi, worshipped in Her temple is made of chlorite stone. She is seated here on a double lotus-pedestal in “Padmasan” as the presiding image of the Laxmi Temple. She is a four-armed deity holding fully blossomed lotus flowers in Her two upper hands. Her lower left hand is found holding a “ratna” in Varada” pose and the lower right hand found in “Avaya-Mudra” blessing Her devotees seeking Her “darshan” in Her temple. Added to the above position, there are two elephants-one on either side of the image-standing on lotus flower. The elephants are found anointing the deity with water from inverted jars. The image of Mahalaxmi is also covered with clothes and flowers. She is adorned with various ornaments. It is said that the height of Mahalaxmi is 3ft shorn of Her adornment. She is about four and a half feet high in Her full-fledged adornment.

As per the traditional ritual, the temple of Mahalaxmi is opened after the opening of the doors of the Grand Temple. The servitor of Mahalaxmi Temple known as ‘Khuntia’ performs the divine ablution of the deity. He baths the image of Mahalaxmi in sweet scented water prepared out of various fragrant-objects like ‘chua’ (a scented oil), sandal-paste, vermillion, Sri Karpura(scented camphor), scented Collyrium etc. He also adorns the deity with various ornaments and flowers dressed in perfect “Odisi” style. This is a unique divine practice. After morning oblation i.e “Sakala Dhupa”, the image



of Mahalaxmi is next decorated with a garland of Sri Jagannath along with the graceful flowers decorating his nose known as Naka-Fula. With the decoration as above, Mahalaxmi, as described in the Rig-Veda, looks like "Hiranyabarna Harinim" which means that Mahalaxmi presents a radiant charming divine-form looking exquisitely beautiful in turmeric colour imbued with splashes of golden shade.

In the matter of general worship of the deity, a peculiar practice is being followed in the temple of Mahalaxmi on the premises of the Grand Temple at Puri. The practice is like this. A devotee going to the Grand Temple for 'darshan' of the Lords is bound by a customary practice. The devotee first needs to have 'darshan' of Mahalaxmi in the outer hall of Her temple. He sits there for a while. The 'Sebayats' say that Mahalaxmi is 'chanchala' in Her nature. As stated in Laxmipurana, She is very fast and quick in all Her actions. Even She does not remain present on Her divine alter constantly for a pretty long time.

So the popular belief is that during the period of a devotee's visit to Mahalaxmi Temple, the goddess may not be present on Her divine throne and so the devotee has to wait for sometime to have Her 'darshan' as Mahalaxmi is in the habit of returning to Her divine alter at frequent intervals.

Sadguru Jagi Vasudev has a different view in this regard. He says that a temple is not simply a sacred place of worship because of consecration of a certain god or goddess. A temple is *prima facie* a divine centre of energy. It abounds in the proliferation of different spiritual vibrations. The devotee sitting in the temple has an immaculate influence of a well-accomplished

spiritual environment. Normally the devotee roams very high in his spiritual emotion. At least, he has a tendency to do so and this is a steady path of alleviation to fulfillment of his spiritual goal. Here the devotee stoops to meditation and sits calmly to pray to god for spiritual blessings. Here again, he has the urge of an immaculate mind which ultimately leads him to positive thoughts. All the negativity in him is automatically annihilated by vibrant divine inspirations. All temples are attuned to this spiritual order. Under such circumstances, it is necessary that a devotee visiting the temple of Mahalaxmi should sit in its outer hall for a while remembering the name of the goddess for his spiritual well-being. Stretching this analogy to the temple of Mahalaxmi further, we may also hold that whatever be the traditional practice in this regard, a devotee sitting in Mahalaxmi temple is bound by a spiritual necessity. Mahalaxmi is the Alhadini-Sakti of Sri Jagannath. A devotee before entering the main temple of the Lord, needs to have the blessings of His Maya Sakti so that the mind of the devotees is not otherwise disturbed; it is mobilized in a positive order when he goes to the main temple of Sri Jagannath.

This is the whole philosophy of Mahalaxmi worship in the Grand Temple at Puri. In Vaishnavism, Sri Jagannath and Mahalaxmi are inseparable in all spiritual rituals. Presence of Sri Jagannath is inconceivable without Mahalaxmi's presence by His side. Even in the car festival, Mahalaxmi is associated with all the ancillary rituals of the function. All the rituals related to Mahalaxmi during Ratha Yatra actually add to the lustre of the festival.

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Significance in Worship of Purushottam Jagannath

Padmanabha Mahapatra



The wooden images of Sri Balabhadra, Sri Subhadra, Sri Jagannath and Sri Sudarshan on the Ratna-Simhasan are unique in more than one respect in the whole of the Hinduistic Culture. No-where-else the images of any famous temple are made of wood, wrapped in cloth pieces starched and painted, worshiped for twelve or nineteen years, then discarded, buried and replaced again. Nowhere-else also wooden images not in descent human figures are found to be worshiped.

Daily Rituals - The daily rituals of the Temple starts with Mangal Alati in the early morning, chronologically followed by Abakasha (taking bath), Besha (dressings), Gopalballava (breakfast), Sakaldhupa (principal meals), Dwipaharadhupa (mid-day meals), Sandhya-Alati, Sandhyadhupa (evening meals), Badasimhar (grand night decoration) and Pahuda (sleep at night) etc. Besides, Sahan Mela (public audience) and Bhogamandop bhogs (public offerings) are suitably fixed as per public needs. In Tantric System, the deities are treated like human beings and are served with the best possible materials and the offerings are designated as Mahaprasad.

The Science of Worship – The worship of Sri Purushottam Jagannath is a special type of science, which establishes relationship between the worshipper and the worshipped. Sri Bhagabatam 7-5-23 enumerates nine methods of

devotion to Parambrahman – “Listening to the stories of Sri Vishnu, singing His glories, constant remembrance of the all-pervading God, serving Him in His devotees, ritualistic Worship, constantly saluting the God, doing all work for His sake, maintaining friendship with the God and complete self-surrender under His feet.

The term ‘Puja’ (Worship) is a spiritual discipline and it follows a highly technical procedure. When the worshipper, Pujapanda in terms of the Jagannath Temple, sits to worship Parambrahma Purushottam Jagannath, he has to think at the very outset that the *Kundalini* (coiled-up Power) is raised up to the *Sahasrara* (thousand-Petalled Lotus) in his head and that he has become identified with the Paramatman in the non-dual consciousness. Then he should think that he has become separated from Him and assume the nature of Jiva again, and that the Supreme light of Paramatman becomes condensed and manifests itself in the form of Purushottam Jagannath to be worshipped. Then the worshipper may feel that he has projected the Deity out from within him and then he performs the basic worship. In brief we may state that Puja is the oneness of the Worshipper and the Ishwar. ‘*Debo bhutwa Debanam apyeti*’ (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad – 4.1.27).

The nature of Worship – The basic characteristics of worship of Purushottam Jagannath are –

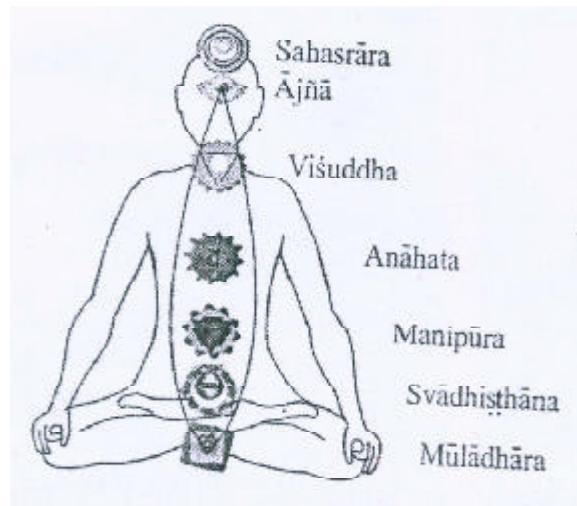


(I) Sacrifices – Sacrifice does not mean just giving, things may be offered without any expectation or return, whatever is offered must be for love and respect but not for barter. It must be ‘*Bhaktyupahratam*’ (Bhagbad Gita 9/26). The basic idea behind sacrifice is nothing but selflessness. Selfishness is the main obstacle in spiritual phenomenon and giving up selfishness is the basic and true meaning of sacrifice.

(II) Adoration – Adoration is love and reverence. Love becomes Bhakti only when it is sublimated by the highest reverence for the Paramatman. Adoration may be performed through rituals, praise and hymnody (Stuti and Kirtan). The chanting of well-established Vishnu-Sahasra-nama is the perfect device of adoration observed in Srimandira.

(III) Sacredness – This is the concept of sanctity. It has three aspects, such as *Adhibhautika*, *Adhidaivika* and *Adhyatmika*. *Adhibhautika* or physical aspect includes – clearing everything connected with worship by application of purified water accompanied with the chanting of prescribed Mantras. Invoking the Deities by utilizing bell, lamp, conch, water and flower etc and sanctifying the Puja articles is the *Adhidaivika* aspect of sacredness. The spiritual (*Adhyatmika*) aspect of sacredness is interlinked with the doctrine of ‘*Atman*’. It is a symbolic purification of mind, leaving up the sin and impurity attitude and manifests itself on Paramatman.

(IV) Cult – There must be some similarity between the Adorer and the Adored. The worshipper of Sri Jagannath should contain some attributes of Vishnu within his heart. Cult can be expressed in two means – myth and rituals. Myth is the sacred story of God. Ritual is a symbolic procedure, which establishes mystic relation between the worshipper and the worshipped. Ritual is observed through utterance of Mantras, as well as through procedural spiritual actions.



Types of Worship – Worships mainly are of two types – External worship and Internal worship. A‘ full-shaped Puja must comprise both the aspects – “Mental worship must accompany every act of external worship” – ‘*Sarbasu bahyapujasu antah puja bidhiyate*’. The process of worship includes ritualistic, vocal, mental and manual systems. Through realistic worship God becomes propitiated and fulfills the worldly desires. This is known as ‘*Karma Karma*’. Vocal worship is the chanting of hymns (*Stotras*). Recitation of Mantra and Visualization of God (*Japa and Bhabana*) come under mental worship. Manual worship is performance of all works as service (*Kain Karya*) to God.

The chronology of Puja system observed in Srimandir – The normal daily Puja of Sri Jagannath consists of six steps, the chronology of which is as below –

(A) Preparations - Keeping ready the articles and the utensils and putting those in their proper places.

(B) Purifications - Prayer to Bhairava, Ghanta Samskar, Achaman, Kushabatu Dharan, Sikha Bandhan, Punyahabachan, Sankalpa, Samanya Arghya Samskar, Ashana Sudhi, bowing down to Adhar-Sakti, driving away the evil spirits,



reverence to five generations of Preceptors in the left, Ganesh in the right, Durga in the front, Kshetrapal in the rear, Narayan in the head and Paramatman on the heart, Kara Suddhi, Namaskar to Dasha Digpalas and Bhuta Shuddhi (Purification of the elements of the body).

(C) Divinization of the Pujak – Pranayam, Matruka Nyasa, Devata Nyasa, Kara Nyasa, Anga Nyasa, Samhar Matruka etc.

(D) Invocation of the Image – Keshabadi Matruka, Tatwa Nyasa, Bhabana Chatustayam, Bibhuti Panjar Nyasa, Dasakshara Gopal Mantra Nyasa, Murtipanjar Nyasa, Astadashakshara Gopal Mantra Nyasa, Dhyanam (different Dhyan Mantras for morning, mid-day, evening and night time Pujas), Dashakshara Dhyanam, Antah Jajanam. (The Nyasas are different in the Puja of Sri Subhadra and Sri Balabhadra).

(E) Preliminaries and Upachar Pradanam – Bishesharghya Samskar, Karkari Samskar, Upachar Samskar, Atma Puja, Pancha Puspanjali, Debata Pitha Puja, Abahnam.

Upachar Pradanam (from Asanam to Naibedyam followed by Tambula Pradanm).

(F) Concluding Rituals – Aratrikam, Prasannarcha, Nirajnam, Mulamantra Nyasa, Rajopacharah, Hinapuram, Bisarjnam, Pradakhinah, Danda Pranam, Tri-puspanjali Pradanam, Chhatra – Chamara – Byajan Samaarpanam, Dhyanam.

Sri Jagannath in Yantra, Tantra and Mantra –

The mode of worship of Sri Jagannath is unique and different from that of Vishnu temples, situated in North and South India. Sri Jagannath is '*Pranab*'. He has been identified with the mystic Vedic Bijamantra '*AUM*'. His Puja has been developed and systematized in a well - planned process by coordinating the basics of Vedic, Tantric and Vaisnavite streams. Dharmasashtras prescribe three main streams of Puja, those are

Nigam, Agam and Locacar. Nigam is the Vedic, Agam is the Tantric and Locacar is the combination of both followed with reference to the prevailing conditions of the locality, time and authorities.

The Deities on the Ratna Simhashan are *Yantrarudhas*, Sri Balabhadra on *Tara Yantra*, Sri Subhadra on *Bhubaneswari Yantra* and Sri Jagannath on *Kali Yantra*. The Daru Debatas are Tantrics, the Vimana of Srimandir is a Siddha Pitha, the Deities are Siddha Yantras and the Srimandir itself stands on the Shree Yantra. To keep all above Yantras, Engines moving, the presence of a perfect Yantree or Engineer is always required, he is the Pujak in the literature of Srimandir 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 way to take up the Puja in a systematic manner. Who are the Gurus then? They are Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswar (Subhadra, Jagannath and Balabhadra). From the above analogy we conclude that in the Puja Paddhati of Srimandir, Guru is there in place of Mantra, Pujak is there in place of Tantra and the Deities are there in place of Yantras.

We must remember that the main intention of worship of Sri Jagannath with all such scientific codified formalities is to reduce egotism, to establish an ever-lasting harmonious relationship with Him and to maintain peace and tranquility in the entire Jagannath-Desh. This truth is Paramatma Sri Jagannath, Truth is Jagannath. He exists at every time and in every thing, nay, He is everything.

Padmanabha Mahapatra, Srimandir Deula Purohita, Matimandap Sahi, Puri.



Musical Symphony in Shree Jagannath Temple

Dr. Jayanti Rath



Music is a universal human phenomenon which incorporates song, play of musical instruments and rhythmic body touch. Music is a “Sonic order”, which as a cultural phenomenon, must be approached in relation to aesthetic, communicative, social, psychological and religious culture – specific categories. It can be understood as a total cultural language, that seeks to express something where words end and touches the cultural self of individuals and societies. It is a vital medium of personal perception and thus especially significant for the emotional transmission of ideas and values. It is a social form of non – verbal communication, taking over functions of consolation, commemoration, remembrance and the representation of ideas and values. It expresses cultural memories and emotions through the creation and recreation of culture – specific – sound spaces which in moments of crisis help to re-establish a feeling of a sociality. Music, in the form of religious chants and the sacred, ritual and liturgical music of diverse societies seems nearly everywhere in the world to work as a privileged expression of religious identity.

The sound of music is intangible, thus abstract. Sound is a presence of something which can not be grasped but which can be perceived and felt. Sound as an intangible medium has the capacity to transgress space. Music therefore is,

on the one hand can only be mediated through physical objects like instruments or the vocal chords.

In rural India, no ritual is performed without music. Odisha is a particularly intriguing region of India. There are 62 numbers of aboriginal tribes who preserve much of their original way of life through their rituals, dance, music, dress, food habits, art etc. Anthropological study refers to various kind of musical instruments used by the tribes of Odisha. Among them mention may be made of Kendera, Vamsi, Dingdinga, Changu, Talamuli, Dhola, Sahnai, Tiko, Jaghia, Kodha, Nagara, Jhumpa, Chhan, Dhollei, Madal, Tumudu, Khanjar, Ghungura, Khola, Mandira, Ramtali, Jhanja, Ghumura, Gadi, Sarangi, Dogra, Katha Tarang, Jhampatala, Ghugudi, Seka Bhajani, Tipa, Naphir, Sarangs, Bira Kahali, Telingi Baja, Dempha Nagara, Dubi Tabla, Pakhanja, Madali, Dodumu, Lidika, Beena, Dhuduki, Ektara, Kansal, Ghanta, Khanjani, Ghadiala, Malaitari, Thakura Baida, Banga, Mardal, Tari, Ramakathi, Dara, Mahuri, Dholaki, Daskathi, Mera cus, Dambaru, Mamrai, Tataudu, Teret, Dhana, Kula, Jhumuka, Langu, Anjilu, Nageswar, Tanak, Kiridi, Nisan, Ghanti, Fiddle, Tasa, Mrudanga, Bengu Vadya, Nal, Jhanjri, Dhapu, Dhamala, Geeni, Buang, Okel, Ladaka, Chhelitipa, Dundia, Dudra, Ramaguta, Rasaturi,



Behela, Dhana Koila, Handi, Kula, Dagudu, Buru, Gagendrai, Banam, Langir, Tuila, Tanarjup, Banam Gipan, Rujing, Rachak, Pelka, Tumdkak etc.

With the advent of modern musical instruments most of these traditional instruments are rapidly vanishing. This is a matter of great concern for our culture.

However, some on the above said instruments are still used in different rituals of temple of Lord Jagannath. Lord Jagannath is considered to be an aboriginal deity. Hence the tribal instruments i.e. Bira Kahali, Telingi Baja, Pakhauja, Mardal, Ghanta, Mahuri, Ghanti constitute an essential part of the worship of the deity. Apart from these instruments 'Veena' and Conch shell constitute an important part in the daily rites of the deities. At the time of Sakala Dhupa (morning offering of food) Car Festival, Pahandi Vije, Bahara Vije use of Madali Pakhauja is a must. In "Srimandira Sattva Lipi", specific mention has been made of use of different instruments inside and outside the temple during several occasions. The persons who are engaged in performance of these instruments are called "Bajantari" and this particular service has been stated as "Baijanti Seva". In course of time some of the Vadya Sevas have been discontinued.

The "Bhitara Gayeni" and the "Bahara Gayeni" Seva in which "Baijanti Seva" is essential, have been discontinued from 1977 and 1996 respectively.

We find the mention of different "sevas" in this text which directly imply that without the operation of certain instruments, the worship of the deities will remain incomplete. They are 'Ghanta Seva' or Ghantua Seva and "Kahalia Seva" "Veena Kara Seva". "Ghanta Seva" is made during all the Bhogas and all festivals of Srimandira i.e. Chandan Yatra, Snana Yatra, Dola

Yatra, Jhulana Yatra, Ratha Yatra, Rama Lila, Krushna Lila, Rukmini Vivaha. During Bahuda Yatra special arrangement of Kansari Ghantua Seva is made.

From morning to night every ritual is attached with music. The singing of "Gita Govinda" in front of the three deities just before their sleep had been in practice from 13th century. (Now this custom is not being observed.)

It reveals that the deities are very fond of music. This system seems very scientific. Music (especially devotional songs) pacifies the nerves. After the tiresome day the human body needs some relaxation, refreshment. In that way Lord Jagannath, the epitome of Odia Race is very much human. So, everything that a normal human being needs for his sustenance had been provided by the Gangavamsi Kings and Suryavamsi Kings who proclaimed themselves as "Rauta" or Sevaka of the Lord. Gone are those days of royal administration. But the practice (excepting a few) continues on and on.

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Perspective of Pluralism and the Pantheon of Diversity: A Cultural Analysis of Jagannath Cult

Dr. Tapan R. Mohanty

Introduction

The study of culture continues to remain an important and fascinating area of research in the realm of social sciences largely due to its ability to influence the present as well as its relevance in understanding the past. In this paper an attempt has been made to look critically at the development and domination of 'Jagannath cult' in Odisha and its importance in developing a sense of 'Odia Nationalism' and 'way of life' disarmingly Odia among the people living in the vast tracts of eastern part of India. This is more so in the context of social healing which is the most important issue if the human civilization has survived the onslaught of terrorism, consumerism and religious bigotry and hatred. The Jagannath cult is not just a mere 'sect' depicting a particular belief or another doctrine of religious practices rather it is a way of life-a defining moment in history of human civilization that has taught cultural syncretism, universal brotherhood and respect to the undying spirit that recognizes the victory of good over evil. It is this understanding of Jagannath cult and its contribution in establishing a religious doctrine based on social inclusion, diversity and devotion that has been theme of this paper. An attempt has been made to systematically analyze this perspective and put into a comprehensive whole beyond the jargons of philosophy and purview of phenomenology.

In a world vivisected by the vagaries of differences and vestiges of structural and functional animosities inherent to traditions the 'cult of Jagannath' has tried to create and sustain a 'sense of universalism' and 'compositeness' through its values, folklores and traditions rather silently and seamlessly which if not ignored completely but often put into the margins of mainline studies. In the midst of the theoretical strand of multiculturalism and cultural pluralism the cult of Jagannath provides us a prism to look into the dimensions where 'etic' becomes 'emic' and 'particularism' and 'universalism', 'little tradition' becomes 'great tradition' and 'symbols' becomes 'systems'. It helps us in understanding its great unifying character as well as its limitations so that an effort can be made to create a substantive and sustainable system of universal values of humanism that will become beacon of hope and aspiration for multitude of marginals and common men lying in the threshold of destitution, denigration and dystrophy.

Conceptualizing Culture and Cultural Pluralism

In order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the concept it is important to have a definition of the culture. Though there is no unanimity regarding the definition of culture but attempts have been made to provide an



understandable limit to the concept, its periphery and perimeter. Klukohn and Kroeber in their monumental volume on culture have tried to define culture in more than hundred ways. It would be perfectly in the ambit of the present article to have a revision of some of these definitions.

Culture shapes a society's core values and norms, which are shared and transmitted from one generation to another through social learning process of modelling and observation, as well as through the effects of one's own actions (Bandura: 1986). This definition of culture encompasses the process of socialization and views norms, values and individual improvisation of social action as culture. Writing on culture in the Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences (1931), Bronislaw Malinowski has defined culture as a functioning, active, efficient well-organized unity, which must be analyzed into component institutions in relation to one another, in relation to the needs of the human organism, and in relation to the environment, man made as well as natural. However, much of the social and anthropological ideas of culture are based on to a great extent on the definition given by Edward Tylor in his book Primitive Culture (1871) where he has defined culture as that "complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, custom, tradition, law, morals and values and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of human society".

Among these definitions one can attempt to arrive at some sort of consensus regarding the nature of the concept. Culture is essentially a human product and though there have been wider variations in identifying and defining that feature. According to Aristotle man is a social animal, the word social qualifies that basic and inalienable identity of man which distinguishes him from other creatures, is essentially culture. Marx was also hinting at the same concept when he tries to distinguish man from animal and emphasizes on production of consciousness, which is located in

the periphery of work. In his philosophical work "German Ideology" Marx has dealt extensively with the concept of work that defines as the human effort to produce means of subsistence through work from nature. For him, work is the ultimate "self expression" which he further enunciates in his description of man as a "species- being".

In the context of Jagannath cult it can be said that all Odias have species-being relationship in terms of their identity and origin with Lord Jagannath. They find their source of social life and fulfilment of community identity only in the mosaic of Shree Jagannath. The vast cultural expanse of Jagannath cult has provided them with an ambience and umbrage under which they grow, ramify and express themselves with utmost grace and grandeur as the 'Children of God'. Further, as Swami Vivekanand explains in a different context, that the issue of identity posited neo-Vedantic philosophy, have neither inherent contradictions nor they suffer from inconsistencies. In fact, the individual identity and the transcendental identity have a context in local and global reality. The intrinsic value of an individual differs distinctly from that of cosmic value yet at a broader spectrum they collapse with each other. The duality of Atma and Parmatma and the importance of Samhita and Brahmana as Swamiji explained have real and ethereal connotations aptly reflecting the divergence and convergence and the convergence of divergences.¹

The Contours of the Cult

The Jagannath cult has a tremendous sense of compositeness and capacity to encapsulate seemingly divergent and contradicting characters. This sense of semblance has been able to provide the healing touch for Odias in general and Hindus in particular in the aftermath of bloody religious conflicts, bigotry, theological obscurantism and cultural hatred- which is often described as 'clash of civilization'. Casteism,



reflected in terms of untouchability and discrimination and the root of division and inequality takes a backseat in Jagannath cult where the ‘tribal’ is the priest and the God comes out every year to meet his devotees leaving his luxurious abode. The folklore of ‘Laxmi Puja’ and legend of ‘Dasia Bauri’- the low caste Hindu whose offered coconut was directly accepted by the Lord, demonstrates the ‘rebelliousness’ of Jagannath cult that threatened to extinguish the very basis of Brahminical orthodoxy and religious hegemony.

Similarly, the opposition to ‘other culture’ largely reflected in terms of ‘Hindu-Muslim’ dichotomy and distortion is attempted to be smothered in the story of ‘Sal Baig’ the Muslim devotee of Lord. During the great car festival the Lord’s chariot stops a few minutes before the grave of this extraordinary devotee before rolling down the path. Not spectacular but certainly symbolic and powerful enough to question and attempt to alter the very structure of the orthodoxy and dominance of elites. The Lord represents the combination of three ‘gunas’ yet He is beyond them, He has a definite size and shape yet He is beyond the Universe and *Nirakar*, He is the representation of Lord Vishnu but He is also worshipped as ‘Purna Brahma’ –the complete consonance of ‘dvait’ and ‘advait’- dualism and non-dualism. He is the manifestation of all the basic colours that one can find in the earth and race in the world. He has eyes bereft of eyelid, hands that are unfinished and nothing beyond the waist yet he sees everything, willing to embrace anyone who submits to him and travel beyond the cosmos. This reflects the encompassing trait of the cult and its ability to embark on a journey to achieve the ‘ultimate bliss’ with pride, prejudice and discrimination. To my mind this is nothing but the noblest of effort in compositeness, structural healing and social inclusion. There are many more examples of this syncretism which have

certainly touch the psyche of Odia and probably as a result there is less of casteism, communalism and to an extent capricious consumerism.

Jagannath Cult : A Synergy

In the midst of various socio-cultural and economic scenario these challenges people tend to find solace in faith primarily because faith has the ability to heal the bruised ego, give home in times of despair and more importantly bridges the emotional fault lines. A close scrutiny of religious ideals and its inherent syncretism denotes primary principles of peace, brotherhood and love. Particularly, in the context of India, it has tremendous significance as spiritualism has been the bedrock of Indian civilization, its ethos and ethics of common man’s livid relationship.

The role of religion in human life can never be undermined as religious belief helps human beings in overcoming trials and tribulations of life. There are so many breaking points in life that one is forced to look for solace, a spiritual synoptic joint and more often than not that is provided by religion. The history of religion is not overburdened with crusades and crucifixion rather it has its fair share of reform, revolt and renaissance. Confucius’s preaching on respect to elders, his belief in simplicity, Jesus’ preaching of universal love, Buddha’s emphasis on compassion, Mohammad’s conceptualization of a land of peace and the flow of devotion and self-realization in Vedas and Upanishads are universal treasures. Throwing these threads of wisdom and values into gutter in the name of obscurantism and hideous is like throwing the baby with bath water.

The Martyrdom of Guru Tegbahadur and creation of ‘Khalsa’ by Guru Govind Singh not only depicts passages of spiritual journey but also is essentially a saga of courage, conviction and confrontation. The proliferation of gurus and godmen in recent times despite obvious transgressions is testimony to the need of the



modern man for a shoulder to lean on. Since time immemorial religion has solved this problem by placating human suffering and sorrows and giving them solace to continue with the life despite innumerable difficulties.

The Cult, Cultural Consciousness and Social Conditioning

The cult of Jagannath is a beautiful exposition of this spirit. It is saga of sublime devotion, tremendous sacrifice and of great synchronism. It is indeed an impossible task to describe and detail the flux and fluctuations, the notions and narratives, the myths and legends of Lord Jagannath but in this piece an attempt has been made to delineate with this great religious tradition. As the name suggests Lord Jagannath is conceptualized as the lord of the universe or the Universal God. The history of Lord Jagannath is the history of Odia nationalism, Jagannath cult encapsulates the life world and worldview of Odias, their sense of spiritual and temporal existence. Lord Jagannath for them is not just merely the reigning deity of Odisha but a living spirit, a member of their family. He is at the same time the saviour and stupor. The story of 'Kanchi Vijaya' is a depiction of Odia identity, sub-nationalism and relationship between God and men. In fact, the story has brought down the Lord from the celestial pedestal to the mortal life and anthropomorphised Him into two Odia soldiers (Paika). By drinking butter milk from the milk woman and giving her His ring, He has established that God is guided by devotion rather than ritualism and caste. The realization of Lords' benevolence has metamorphosed the King from gallant warrior to a humble devotee, thus reinforcing the principle of equality before God. More interesting is the evolution and proliferation of this cult across the length and breadth of the country in general and Odisha in particular. It provides a fabulous opportunity to a sociologist for exploring the cultural context of social life.

One of the key aspects of contextualizing Jagannath cult is to relate it to the rise of Odia nationalism, construction of Odia identity and the ethnic values associated along with. Blumer defined an ethnic group as 'a collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared past and cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements which define the group's identity such as kinship, religion, language, shared territory, nationality or physical appearance². According to Max Weber, 'ethnic groups are those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of a group. Conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relation exists³.

Probably for this reason Benedict Anderson uses the expression 'imagined communities' to describe ethnic groups in general and ethnic communities in nation-states in particular. However, in the context of anthropology, primitive tribes and tribal groups comes much closer to a definition of ethnic groups forming a close knit community with several commonalities often questioning the basis of Anderson's theory. The attributes of tribal communities expressly denote geographical proximity, face-to-face interaction and cultural and occupational sameness which led to Durkheim describe them as 'mechanical solidarity—the solidarity of similarities. It is indeed this notion of ethnicity and identity that needs to be understood and examined. To my mind Odia ethnic and cultural identity is not just an 'imagined community' but a deeply entrenched 'organized community'.

In the context of above analysis it is needless to mention that the cultural background of Odia social life is deeply influenced by not just



the mainline cult of Jagannath but its innumerable often invisible sub-streams. One of the major streams of Jagannath cult is the rise, growth and development of Bhakti cult in general and time of *Panchasakha* in particular. *Panchasakha* as the name suggests consists of five illustrious contemporaries namely, Jagannath, Balaram, Achyuta, Ananta and Yashovanta. All of them used the title Das in their name suggesting that they are all the servants of the Lord. Out of them Jagannath Das achieved iconic status in all Odia families across the state for his 'Bhagavat'. It is important to mention that Jagannath Das's Odia Bhagavat though written in the line of main Sanskrit Bhagavat but it is more of a trans-creation than a mere translation. Written in Navakshari Chanda (nine letter style) in Odia, its famous for its simplicity, depth of thought process and moving depiction of life and times of characters of Mahabharat in general and Krishna in particular. The simple truth of life, conflict and cohesion in society, duties and responsibilities of individual and an untrammelled faith in God form the kernel of Odia Bhagavat. One can find not just traces but a complete picture of picturesque Odia rural life and travails of human existence is chronicles in all its glory. Education and literacy were measured in terms of one knowing and reciting the lines of Bhagvat and it is believed that if person listens its couplets before his death then his soul achieves salvation.

Along with Sarala Das's Mahabharat, Jagannath Das's Bhagavat formed stepping stones not just in stirring a sense of religious consciousness among Odia people but created a sense of identity through their language. By writing in local language and dialect about religious and social issues, making them it more popular and they not transgressed superiority of Sanskritic tradition but created new socio-religious realignment. Till then every intelligentsia worthy of its salt has to prove himself by writing in pristine Sanskrit, unfortunately despite its brilliance the language was limited to

few elites of society only. As a result a vast section of men across the state and most of women despite their intense desire remained outside the orbit of religious recitations, understanding and realization due this linguistic barrier. These new vernacular texts broke their chain of deprivation, destroyed dominance of Sanskrit, the then intellectual class's obnoxious allurement towards Sanskrit and thus the monopoly over text and God. It also allayed the deep rooted fear psychosis that by reading and writing these religious scriptures in vernacular language will bring disaster for the men, their families and society. With this gigantic step Jagannath cult moved from the paradigm of elitist to mass, esoteric to exoteric, from tradition to modernity, from class to mass, and in that sense I consider, this cult took the God to men, and realised them from the bondage of ritualism, obscurantist and cultural irredentism. In a sense it transformed a hitherto elite culture to a more accessible and refined popular culture.

The Swami of Shreekshetra

The temporal abode of Lord Jagannath, a relatively small town known as Puri is located at coast of Bay of Bengal in eastern Odisha. This place is also known as 'Sri Kshetra' means 'the best of religious places' and has tremendous religious significance. It is one of the four 'dhamas' or scared places of Hinduism, which was sanctified by Adi Shankaracharya when he chose this place for establishing one of his four monasteries as strategic effort to unite Hindus across the four corners of India. Adi Shankaracharya, a great apostle of monism found the pluralism embedded in Jagannath cult not a negation of his belief but an affirmation of monism. His 'Jagannath Stakam' despite its Sanskritic hyperbole is still chanted with awe and reverence to please the Lord.

Similarly, the fame of the cult and the deity enamored Mahatma Tulsi Das and the great saint



came calling to have a ‘darshan’ of Lord but to his utter dismay the ‘half-built’ statutes of Lord was an ‘anathema to the beauty’ that he had associated with Lord Rama in its imagery. He left the temple disheartened but upon arrival at his resting-place he saw Lord Rama in dream chiding him for his foolishness and inability to recognize and extolled him to visit the temple again. The great saint got up seeing the dream and after morning ablution left for the temple and to utter surprise saw Lord Jagannath as he worshipped in ‘Ramavtar’-Lord Rama with all His glory and mighty. In order to please his devotee the lord transformed himself from the ‘unfinished and ugly’ deity to the handsome and grandeur Ram, Laxman and Sita. Thus the Lord proved again the finiteness of human mind and infinity of God. It also bridges the gap that continued to be associated with the followers of lord Rama and Krishna- cause for much heartburn and terrible misunderstanding.

Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra along with Sudarshan, the reigning lords of Shree Kshetra are often portrayed as depiction of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar, the holy trinity of Hinduism. It is also attempt in bridging the gap between the Shaivites and Vaishnavites within the sphere of Hinduism. Further, along with Goddess Lakshmi, in Shree Jagannath Temple, the reigning Goddess is Vimla- a form of Goddess Durga and it is believed that unless the Prasad is offered to Goddess Vimla, it cannot transform itself into Mahaprasad. In this sense the cult of Jagannath in its own simple and sublime way has syncretised itself into not just a pan-Indian but a Universal culture, thus justifying the name of the deity- Jagannath- the Lord of the Universe. In a sociological sense one can find the fulcrum of ‘Universalization’ and ‘Parochialization’ in the same token as well as ‘modernization of tradition’ and ‘traditionalization of modernity’.

The story does not end here either, as the important part of this cult is its social character

and role in dismantling social hierarchy as well as creating a platform for social harmony. As if to prove this point the King of Odisha and Vicar of Lord has to sweep the floor before the ‘Juggernaut’ rolls during the famous car festival. Before the eyes of the millions of devotees the king assumes the role of a scavenger thus symbolically razing the caste hierarchy to dust. The legends of Jagannath cult is replete with stories where the mighty king has to humble before the simple devotee as Lord has always prioritized the purity of heart over the plentitude of resources. The emergence and popularity of Odia Bhagabat and its standing in countryside was a sort of ‘coup de grace’ as far as the war between the prince and plebeians of religion is concerned. The privilege to worship God was a personal treasury of ‘twice born’ castes and this tradition was perpetuated by confining the sacred to ritual, resources and to the rumblings of a beautiful yet difficult language i.e. Sanskrit. The predominance of Sanskrit as the language of God created its own sharks and they made an attempt to hijack the God from its worshippers. This led to writing of sacred texts in vernacular language making it accessible to multitude of devotees and disallowing the mercenaries to have a field day. To insult to injury this work was done by a man from a low caste but in the end the Lord has to intervene to prove that he is not chained by strictures of text neither he is fettered to rituals. Rather He is closer to the devotee, who with all his innocence and simplicity has faith in Him even in extreme conditions.

Probably the best attack of the cult on casteism and conservatism is found in the legend of ‘Dasia Bauri’. Dasia, a low caste Hindu wanted to offer the first fruit of his tree i.e. a coconut to the Lord but was unable to do so because of poverty. He then went to the village priest who was on a pilgrimage to Puri and requested him to take his offerings to God and forbade him to



present the gift unless the God accepts it in his own hand. Considering this request as outrageous, blasphemous and simply insane the priest left the temple without offering the coconut and in the night in dream he was questioned by Lord that why he did not give him his share which was send by Dasia. The very next day the priest went to the temple an offered it and two hands from that unfinished statue came out to collect the gift. This story symbolically represents the social inclusion agenda of the Odia society and its ability to put devotion over ritualism and birth order. Probably for this reason we do not find strong caste sentiments in Odia society unlike the northern and southern parts of India. Further, the story of Laksmi Puran shows the fallibility of caste order and gives equality to all castes before the God and in a seemingly disconcerting way tries to destroy the rigidity of caste order. The premise of eating the Prasad on the lanes of Anand Bazar forging a unity of devotees destroying social hierarchy gives the message of unity of souls and ephemeral nature of social boundary. It questions the very centrality of caste system based on restriction on commensality.

The cult of Jagannath is a virtual exposition of plurality and probably the best example of composite culture. It is believed that Lord Jagannath is an adopted version of a tribal deity. It was worshipped by a tribal chieftain in a mountain cave and was stolen by a diplomat deputed by the King but the statue vanished giving the king a lesson in truth and honesty. However, the prayer of king was answered and king asked him to collect three huge logs from the sea and to prepare the statues. As they say the rest is history. But what is important to know that till date the Lord is worshipped, fed and nurtured by the heirs of that tribal chieftain and this shows the compositeness of the cult and its social message.

The famous Buddhist King Indrabhuti invoked Buddha in Jagannath and chanted that

'Lord Jagannath is Maha Buddha and source of highest of all ritual'. Even romance is a part of this tradition as Jayadev's *Gita Govindam* is sung every night before closing the temple for the day. Beyond the boundary of divine and mundane life music and dance as the epitome of cultural artefact have weathered farther time and by adopting it as a regular and daily practice at the temple denotes not just the refined taste of Odia consciousness but has taken it to a state of sublime from supplementary. The *tamsik* has been transformed into *satvik* and to my mind this transformation has a lot to do with society and culture than religion. In fact, by recognizing transformative potential of music and dance and splashing it with colours of creativity, devotion and as an instrumentality of worship, the cult of Jagannath has blurred the boundary of 'class' and 'mass'.

Similarly, one of the greatest devotees of Lord Sal Baig is a Muslim and his prayers are not only regarded with respect but are equally popular as well making the cult trans religious. Even today the audio cassettes of Sal Baig's prayers to Lord sung by various singers tops the demand. The famous car festival will take place on 29th June and millions of devotees will come from across the globe to have the glimpse of God in all His mighty and glory. The legend says that once in a year the Lord visits his devotees away from the comforts and luxury to see the real world. It is also his desire to give His 'darshan' to many who for various reasons have failed to see in his abode. It is a common festival where an uncommon God descends to the common world and become a commoner. The cult of Jagannath in nut shell is the 'cult of commonness' where he is pictured, prophesized and prayed, as the common man wants Him to be. The cult of Lord Jagannath has transcended the boundary of being esoteric, elitist and ornamental to be part of the popular culture and common consciousness. Each of the fairs,



festivals and rituals followed in the temple has capacity to unify and include everyone rather than create a web of difference. The only difference is the nature of this cult that has detested the exclusivist agenda of Brahminical Puritanism and the desire to create an army of intermediaries between the God and His devotees. In this time of crisis and turbulence let's pray for His blessings.

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Footnotes :

1. See Lectures from Colombo to Almorah for a detail analysis of this viewpoint.
2. Blumer, 'Ethnicity and the Welfare State, International Social Science Journal (1987), p193. Cited by Ambrose Pinto, 'Basic Conflict of 'We' and 'They' between Social and Ethnic Groups' in Imtiaz Ahmad et al eds. Pluralism and Equality, New Delhi: Sage Publication, pp.180-196.
3. M. Weber, 'Economy and Society', in G. Rath and C. Wittich, eds. An Outline of Interpretive Sociology, Vol.1, New York: Bedminster Press, 1968, p.339. Cited by A. Pinto Ibid.

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Tradition of Devadasi : A Conceptual Framework in India and Abroad

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The antiquity of the *devadasi* tradition mystifies its origin. But the inscriptive sources and the temple architectures provide certain relevant and significant information regarding this holy tradition.

A *devadasi* was popularly known as devoted temple dancer. She uses to perform her dances with a view to entertaining the Lords or Gods, but certainly not to the human beings. But because the people used to witness such dances, *Devadasi* became a source of entertainment for the folk.

In the ancient times the *devadasis* were divided into seven categories. They are known as *Dutta*, *Hruta*, *Bikrita*, *Bhrutya*, *Alankara* and *Gopika* or *Rudraganika*. Such categories reveal the origin and status of the *devadasis*.

When a sacred man offered his daughter to a temple as a *devadasi*, she is known as “*Dutta devadasi*”. But when a lady was kidnapped and subsequently employed in a temple, she is known as “*Hruta devadasi*”. Sometimes when a lady was sold to the administrator or the priest of a temple, she is known as “*Bikrita devadasi*”. If a lady voluntarily worked in a temple as a devadasi, she is known as ‘*Bhrutya devadasi*’. Some women who devotionally offered themselves to serve the temple are known as ‘*Bhakta*

devadasi”. When a woman after attaining a certain degree of competence, is offered to the temple with ornaments, she is known as “*Alankara devadasi*”. The *devadasis* who were getting remunerations for offering dance and music in the temple in a particular time became identified as “*Gopika*” or “*Rudraganika*”. These classes of the *devadasi* were receiving fixed remunerations and some landed property for their personal use.

The *devadasi* tradition was prevalent in the Hindu Temples of Southern India. There was a custom amongst the Korea (weaver) community of Chigalput district of Madras that they had to donate or offer their eldest daughter to a temple. These girls were called ‘*Basava*’ in Telugu and ‘*Murali*’ in Maharastra. Some of them were actually led a sacred and celebrated life devoting themselves to God. Some others became the victims of the sexual lust of the priests and other temple officers and sometimes even of the influential people of the community.

The *devadasi* tradition was prevalent in Karnataka, Maharastra, Madras, Kerala, Goa, and Andhra Pradesh. In the inscriptions of southern India some kings, queens and royal families donated lands for the perpetuation of this holy tradition in a particular temple. There are



some information available regarding *devadasi* traditions in the temple inscriptions of *Korangunathan*, *Pipilikeswar* and *Sundereswar* of Trichinapalli district. In 12th century, Chalukyaing Vikramaditya I established a holy temple in the name of *Chandaleswar* and collected some beautiful ladies from different countries and employed them as temple-dancer or *devadasis*.

This tradition was also prevalent in some places in the eastern India. Now in the Garo hills of Assam there is a tribal community who has known as “*maharies*”. There are some similarities between the *maharies* of Puri and Garo hills.

In the holy temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri, this dancing girl tradition was prevalent too. There is a dancing ritual in the temple of Lord Jagannath at the time of the Lord’s retirement to sleep. For this purpose special *sebakas* were employed. They were known as *devadasis* and their dance was known as *devadasi* dance or *mahari* dance.

Descriptions on the rituals of dancing in different inscriptions of India were available. In the stone inscription of *Yogimara* Cave (3rd century B.C.), *Bhujabeswar* Temple (975 A.D.), *Kalipadaswami* Temple (1018 A.D.), *Brahmeswar* Temple (1053 A.D.), *Megheswar* Temple (1070 A.D.), *Sovaneswar* Temple (1080 A.D.), *Narendreswar* Temple (1083 A.D.), *Mukhalingam* Temple (11th century A.D.), *Jaladiswar* Temple (1144 A.D.), *Agastiswar* Temple (1158 A.D.), *Laxmi Nrusingha* Temple of Simanchalam (15th century A.D.) and *Sri Jagannath* Temple (16th century A.D.) there were some evidences of dancing rituals or the *devadasi* traditions.

Even in the ancient Indian culture the queens in the royal palace were adept in dance and music. The queens of Gangaudayaditya and

the three queens of Hiochillaballa 1st were experts in dancing. Sabaldevi, the queen of Somadeva of Kalachuri was also an expert in singing and dancing. During the reign of Raj Raj 1st of Chola four hundred dancing girls were appointed in the temple of Tanjore. Bhattacharya, the minister of Haribarman of East Bengal also appointed one hundred dancing girls in the temple of *Ananta Basudev*. In a Siva Temple of Deopara of East Bengal many Devadasis were employed during the reign of Vijaya Sen. At the time of Chandellamadan Verma, Padmabati was appointed as the dancer- in- chief in the *Nilakantha* Temple of Kalanjar.

The rain-dance of Rajabansi of Kuchvihar bears resemblance to the *devadasi* dance. They called this dance as nude-dance. Some women were dancing nude in front of their holy deity in a forest.

In Kalhana’s *Rajatarangini* there are some descriptions about the dancing girls, who were attached to the temples in Kashmir from ancient time. In Kalhana’s own time the dancing women of the temples appear to have been keenly interested in politics. In this book he gave some information that there were some instances of dancing girls of the temples who became consorts of kings.

In the *Meghadutam* of Kalidas, *Mruchhakatika* of Sudraka, *Kultinimata* of Damodara Bhatta, *Samayamatruka* and *Srungarmanjari* of Kshemendra, *Ramacharita* of Sandhyakara Nandi, in *Saduktikarmamruta* there were some information about the dancing girls.

Not only in India but also in some of the Western countries, such types of ritual dances were in vogue. From the Ankor Borei inscription of Cambodia or ancient Kambuja, it is found that seven dancing girls, eleven singers and four



violinists were appointed in the temple. The time of this inscription is 533 *Sakabda* i.e. 611 A.D. In the countries like Egypt, Greece, Assyria, Phinisia and Babylon etc. this type of dance was also found. In Armenia there was a tradition or principle that the nobles employed their unmarried daughters for the service of Goddess *Anaitis*. In Babylon not a single girl before her marriage could be spared from this type of duty. This was a binding obligation at the time. But the custom of dancing after marriage was not an obligation. In the exodus of Bible there are also some references to such dances. There was also information regarding *devadasi* tradition of Babylon. Ishtar was the famous deity of Babylon. *Devadasis* were appointed as the Ishtar. A strange custom was prevalent in Babylon in which the matured girls were asked to sit in the temple Ishtar, whoever would drop a silver coin to any girl of the queue, she used to become his property and the person establishes his relationship with her. This practice was not at all appreciated by many, as it laid open the sexual escapades. They treated it a kind of exploitation. But at the same time the historians Herodotus recorded that the money earned through such practice by the girls was considered to be holy in Babylon and Cyprus. The Hebrew Quadeshah belonged to this category. *Arthashastra* of Kautilya informed that the royal treasury accepted such money as the property of the Kingdom.

Marco Polo also described that in his time parents were dedicating their daughters to the Gods. They (parents) kept their daughter with them for dancing services in the temples on important festive occasions. This ritual was repeated till the day of their marriage.

This *devadasi* tradition prevailed in Missore, the most ancient civilized country of the world. The deity of this country was Amman. In

1400 B.C. Amos Hotep Thibes III of Missore constructed a beautiful temple and established the deity. He had conquered many countries and collected funds. To accredit his triumphal march he had constructed temples, donated funds for the rites and rituals of the temple and engaged *devadasis*. There was a document known as Great Harris Papyrus in which there was description that Ramesis III donated 84, 486 servants and *devadasis* etc. and many landed property to the temple of Amon. Some historians are of the opinion that this was the most primitive record of *devadasi* tradition of the world.

In the history of Greece there is some information of *devadasis*. The *devadasis* were appointed in the temple of Apple, the Sun God. They were exhibiting dance in the temple and it was enjoyed by the temple priests, kings and powerful persons etc.

But in Carthege town situated on the northern coast of Africa, there was a traditional religious belief which was known as "Punic". This religion imposed the human sacrifice and child sacrifice. Tanith was the famous deity of Carthege. In this temple a record was available which indicated that ladies were also purchased along with the animals for the purpose of the temple. Some historians interpreted it as an evidence of dancing girl tradition. But in Phinicia in northern coast of Africa, there were some instances about the tradition of temple dancer or *devadasis*.

The tradition of dancing girl could be located in Rome. Historical evidences of the appointment of dancing girls or *devadasis* in the temple of Juno, Venus and Jews at Rome were also recorded.

In the Inca civilization of South America, there were some instances about the dancing girl tradition. The king of Inca identified himself as the son of the sun. In this state sun temple were



managed by the priests. The priests were selecting tiny and pretty girls and took them to Cuzco, an educational institution and educated them. When these girls got maturity, they had to live as the kept of the king or they had to stay at the temple as the virgins of the Sun.

From these above information we came to know that in India and abroad some girls were engaged in the service of the Gods and Goddess as dancing girls. But analyzing the history of religious tradition it is found that some matured girls were appointed or employed as the temple-dancers or *devadasis* for the entertainment of the Gods. It was a sacred service. From these girls those who were not maintaining their sacred life, they were constrained to accept prostitution. For this not only the *devadasis* were responsible, but also the priests who were creating manipulation in the religion were also responsible.

Consequently this tradition of converting women particularly virgins into *devadasi* was responsible for spreading prostitution in ancient Near East (Mesopotamia, Syria, Canaan, Analolia, Cyprus, Greece). The Goddesses concerned were Ishtar, Astarte, Ma, Anat and Aphrodite etc.

This sacred *devadasi* tradition was responsible for the establishment of prostitution as an independent service. So in the temples, temple-dancers or *devadasis*, in the courts the court dancers, and city dancers in cities were seen. In the countries like Greece, the city dancer was given the highest privileges. These city dancers were known as “*hataera*”. Many intellectuals and educated persons used to visit their houses. They not only discussed with the dancers but also learnt their opinions, proposals and suggestions on various issues. Like Greece, geisha dancers in Japan had a social reputation. These geisha dancers were very beautiful, educated as well as fond of dance and music. They could attract the public by their art performances. But in the later

period they did not maintain their sacred life and joined in the profession of prostitution.

The tradition of *devadasi* was very famous not only in India but also in the countries beyond India. But due to the illegal, irreligious attitudes of some priests, nobles and powerful persons, this sacred tradition became extremely polluted. Because of the degeneration of the sacred tradition, the reformers were compelled to abolish ritualistic practice of *devadasis*.

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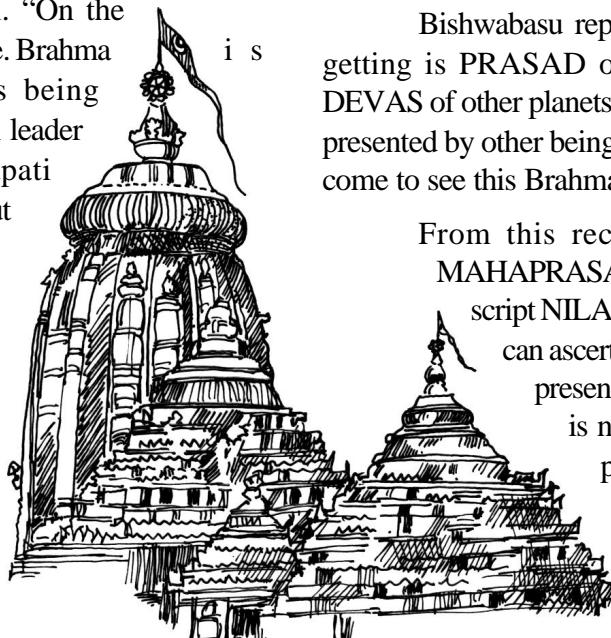


Mystic Phenomena of the Temple of Lord Jagannath

Somanath Khuntia

When King Indradyumna, the King of Avantee, wanted to know where the real Brahma was, he sent his ministers all over India to find out, but they returned without success. So to Odisha known as UTKAL at that time another minister Bidyapati was sent. He was told by the tribal people of Puri. "On the beach in the Neelagiri cave. Brahma is to be found". He was being worshipped by their tribal leader Bishwabasu. So Bidyapati came and met the chief. But in spite of all his probings, no information was divulged, no place was even shown, so secret and sacred was this Brahma to Bishwabasu. The minister was forced to stay on for many years. With the hope of discovering this Brahma, Bidyapati married the chief's daughter Lalita.

Afterward Bidyapati was stunned when Bishwabasu would return from his worship of Brahma. He gave Bidyapati very fine rice Prasad and other delicacies, curries and fruits not found



in Puri at that time. Biswabasu himself would be smelling of heavenly camphor from his Arati. Bidyapati saw rare flowers that were not in season in Puri at that time. So he asked his father-in-law. "Sir, where did this fine rice and all these rare flowers come from?"

Bishwabasu replied, "The rice you are getting is PRASAD offered to Brahma by DEVAS of other planets and the flowers are also presented by other beings from outer space who come to see this Brahma."

From this record of the origin of MAHAPRASAD found in the palm leaf script NILADRI MAHODAYA, we can ascertain quite clearly that this present day Jagannath Temple is not only an attraction for people of this world, but for the inhabitants of other spheres, or LOKAS, as well.

When King Indradyumna heard from Bidyapati that Brahma was at Puri, he immediately went there and wanted a temple built. His wish was fulfilled, then he wondered which deity was to be worshipped there. He dreamt that a log of wood would be floating near the beach. Out of this log, the deities



must be made. The dream came true. In procession the wood was taken to the temple. But again the king wondered. In which shape should the deities be carved? Nobody could offer the king any suggestions.

At last an old man came and offered to carve the deities. He looked so old, like a man about to die, all doubted that he could achieve success. When asked what his name was, he said emphatically, "My name is VISWAKARMA, the maker of the universe. I am from another world." People all around him laughed and thought that the old man would be shown to be a fool at last. However, King Indradyumna assigned the work to him. Viswakarma made three conditions :

- 1) He must be closed in a room where he would work for 21 days.
- 2) He would not take food or drink during this period.
- 3) He must not be disturbed.

Once this was agreed to, Viswakarma entered the closed chamber. Everybody suspected a trick, as there was no sound of any carving. The queen also became suspicious, thinking that the old man might even have died. Out of great anxiety the door was opened before the 21 days were up. Nobody was there, the old man had vanished. Only a voice was heard. "Oh King ! Worship these unfinished deities I have carved. You have broken your promise. I came from DEVALOKA only to make the full form of the deities you wanted to have !"

It means the divine craftsman himself came down to earth to help make the TRINITY known today as Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Mother Subhadra. They have been worshipped in Jagannath Temple, Puri for more than three thousand years.

As these stories about the origin of Jagannath Temple reveal, Lord Jagannath is a mystic deity. There are many phenomena surrounding Him which cannot be explained by modern science. Not only do sages, seers, and people from different parts of the world come to see Him, but also inhabitants of other spheres as well. As he is considered the master of the universe, He attracts all. There is documental evidence to support many of these occurrences in the form of eyewitness reports and objects left by divine beings when they came. These events are also documented in ancient epics, palm leaf scripts, and in texts written by scholars and sages of the past. Some are as follows :

1) MANIMA DAKA Sloka (source unknown)

*"Rajadhi Rajarajeshwer
Ishwara Thakur, Manima !
Anantakoti Brahmanda,
Ishwara Thakur, Manima!
Chaturdasha Bhubana
Ishwara Thakur, Manima !"*

In the daily rituals of the temple, this prayer is recited at the time when Lord Jagannath retires to bed.

The meaning is this:

*"Oh Lord Jagannath !
You are King of kings !
You are Master of many universes!
You are the Controller of all creation !"*

The Khuntia worshipper who recites this Sloka then scatters flower petals on the beds of the deities. After doing so, he also tosses petals up into the air to welcome all the divine beings who have come that evening to observe this ritual.

2) Kadachit Kalindi Sloka by Saint Adishankar in his Sanskrit verses "Jagannath Astaka"



*“Rama, Samvu, Brahma, Surapati
Ganesh Archit Padam
Jagannatha Swami, Nayana Pathagami,
Bhava Tume”*

The meaning is:

Even Gods like Rama, Shambhu (Shiva), Brahma the Creator, Surapati, the king of Gods, Ganesh, the elephant god of Wisdom, all of whom belong to Devaloka, worship Lord Jagannath at Puri.

3) *Jatta chhaya Lokamatra
Tribhubana Janata Badhate
Na Tritap”*

This means that the inhabitants of all LOKAS, or spheres, are under the protection of Lord Jagannath. This sloka is taken from BRAHMA GEETA. (Writer not known)

4) from Kapila Samhita

*“Sarba Rahasya Purusottamasya
Deva Na Janati Kuta Manusya.”*

The meaning is that the mystery of Lord Jagannath cannot be known by the Devas; so what to speak of man !

5) from Skanda Purana

*“Byomatit Byomarupa Prakasa
Byomakar Byapino Byomarudha.”*

The glory of Lord Jagannath is described here. He can take on any shape. He is as limitless as the sky itself. He is even beyond that. The whole cosmos of life is divided into many spheres or LOKAS. These are described in the palm leaf scripts, Lokabimarsa, Loka Tattwa and Lokamimansa. As life evolves from lower to higher forms, consciousness becomes more individualized and expansive. The main Lokas are 21 in number. They are as follows:

The Underworld Lokas

1) Patala, 2) Talatal, 3) Rasatal, 4) Bitala, 5) Mahatala, 6) Atala, 7) Bhutala

The Earth Lokas

8) LOKA, this Earth, 9) Pitruloka, 10) Matruloka, 11) Pretaloka, 12) Bhutaloka, 13) Jakshaloka, 14) Swargaloka

The Higher Lokas

15) Divya loka, 16) Kinnara loka, 17) Gandharva loka, 18) Deva loka, 19) Sura loka, 20) Vishwa loka, 21) Goloka

Paranormal events occur on earth when beings from these other regions are present. According to the LOKA they come from, they appear in different ways.

1. PATALA LOKA

This is a sphere of the underworld which supports life on earth. It is said Vasuki, the snake who holds the world in proper balance, lives in Patala Loka. He comes to Jagannath Temple only at special Darshan times. If he is present, there will be a loud rustle in the crowd.

2. TALA TAL LOKA

When inhabitants of this Loka come, there will be rays of light of various eyed, or other deformed persons. They carry flowers in their palms to offer to the deities colours which can be seen by the naked eye. These beings come in disguise of blind, lame, one-in the crowd this can be seen easily.

3. RASA TAL LOKA

If a strong wind passes through the crowd and a hot place becomes cool suddenly, beings from this Loka have come. They often come also as children and sing loudly during Kirtan, even though they know nothing about all these things. They smile in the crowd after seeing the deities.



4. BITALA LOKA

Beings from Bitala Loka come as birds, although not as vultures, who signify bad days ahead when they are seen.

5. MAHATALA LOKA

Beings from this sphere come as animals such as cats, monkeys, and dogs. As dogs cannot enter the temple, if one is spotted inside, it is said to have come from this Loka. If this happens, it is felt the food that day was cooked in an impure way. All offerings must be stopped and the foods prepared again.

This dog is called KUTAMA CHANDI. He always disappears mysteriously.

6. ATALA LOKA

Sages and saints with long beards who are deep in meditation often come from this sphere. They even walk into the temple with half-closed eyes. Only to look upon Lord Jagannath Himself do their eyes open fully.

7. BHUTALA LOKA

Those who sweep the temple floors, make garlands for the deities, prepare the wicks and lamps, make the earthen pots for the kitchen, and fetch the water are often from this region. Their duties are not hereditary, but are done purely for spiritual pleasure.

8. LOKA, this earth

Ordinary people from all parts of this visible world come to Jagannath Temple with a vast variety of wishes, both worldly and spiritual. The word Loka means people. Before birth all came from other Lokas, according to previous habits and activities. They wish to go to higher Lokas, by dint of their human birth. Inside the temple they come under the influence of beings from these other spheres, who are also present there, whether they are aware of them or not.

Actually, the very purpose of human birth is to pass through all the Lokas by degree. It is also told in ancient scriptures of India that the gift of human birth is the greatest boon God gives. In no other Loka can a being progress spiritually. That is why Devas and demonic spirits both long to return to earth.

9. PITRU LOKA

These beings are the ancestors from the father's side of one's family. They come to the temple of Lord Jagannath at dawn when there is less rush. If one finds a man having a similar face to one's father, he is from Pitruloka. If one feels attraction to some unknown person, he is certainly related and has come down from this Loka. Inhabitants of Pitruloka come to earth as human beings.

10. MATRU LOKA

These beings give the same signs of their presence here, but they are from the mother's side of one's family.

11. PRETA LOKA

Those who commit suicide come to this Loka after death. This is the region of bad spirits and beings of evil demonic nature. They come inside the temple, but only to the outer portions, not into the inner altar of the deities. They criticise, joke, and make noise or other disturbances in spiritual gatherings there. Their coming is signalled by a bad smell, like that of a dead body.

12. BHUTA LOKA

This Loka is similar to Pretaloka, only the confused inhabitants here have taken their lives by poison.

13. JAKSHA LOKA

People in a crowd wearing gorgeous dress are often Jakshas in disguise. They have



come to this earth for worldly comforts and bad motives, such as how to collect money from those present in the crowd. They wear gold ornaments and precious gems to impress others.

14. SWARGA LOKA

SWARGA means Heaven. Beings from this sphere have this sign. In darkness there will suddenly be light. Many people present may experience a divine feeling without any visible reason at all. Not flowers but petals only will be found scattered on the floor afterwards.

15. DIVYA LOKA

When divine beings of this Loka come auras of different colours will fill the atmosphere. Even in darkness, these can be seen slightly. Some of the temple lamps (DIPAS) may be mysteriously extinguished at this time. Beings from DIVYALOKA do not come in form, but only as light and auras. There are other signs, but mortal man cannot have concrete experiences of them.

16. KINNARA LOKA

When Kinnaras come to the temple, they come as dancing girls. They may be seen visibly if one's third eye is open. They are eight in number, the ASTASAKHIS : RAMBHA, URBASI, MENAKA, TILLOTAMA, MANJUJOSI, ROCHIKA, MOCHIKA, and SUNDAREE. They come as DEVADASIS also, only to dance before Lord Jagannath before He goes to bed. They are decorated in flowers only, no ornaments.

17. GANDHARVALOKA

During devotional singing these beings are always present, both inside and outside the temple. They sing in chorus spiritual songs known as BHAJANS, meant only for the deities. If an ordinary person's singing is especially sweet one night, or soft sweet music is heard in the midst of silence, a Gandharva is present. According to

NADA SHASTRA, there are ten types of divine sounds that may be heard inwardly, the two highest being the sound of the flute and OM.

18. DEVA LOKA

Many gods come to Jagannath Temple to pray every night, such as Indra, God of rain; Baruna, God of the ocean : Vayu, God of wind; Laxmi, Goddess of wealth; Saraswati. Goddess of wisdom. The sign of their presence is complete tranquility and peace in the midst of a huge crowd. It would appear as if nobody at all was there. After they go, flowers of different varieties are usually found scattered on the floor of the temple.

19. SURA LOKA

Sura means strength especially the divine strength of mother. Beings from this Loka come to the temple during Darshan time known as SAHANA MELA. They come in a big rush so that the crowd is forcibly pushed aside for them to proceed to the deities without any difficulty.

20. VISHWA LOKA

Those who come from VISHWA LOKA think that Lord Jagannath is just like a human being. The worshippers of the temple who are in charge of decorating the deities with flowers, sandalwood paste and beautiful dresses and take great pleasure in doing such spiritual things are often from VISHWA LOKA. They seem to be worldly with homes and family life like ordinary people. But they are born to serve the supreme Brahma.

21. GOLOKA

From Goloka come Sri Krishna Himself and the Gopis. Even though there might be a big rush inside the temple everybody will love the gathering. All present will feel attracted towards something unseen and smell soothing fragrances all around. In the crowd there will be more ladies than men. Most significant of all everyone will hear a mysterious sweet laughter in the air.



There are other spheres of Lokas also such as:

1. Shiva Loka - the abode of Shiva (on no moon day)
2. Vishnu Loka - the abode of Vishnu (on full moon day)
3. Brahma Loka - the abode of Brahma (on Ekadasi day)
4. Asura Loka - the abode of demons (on Janmastami day)
5. Yama Loka - the abode of Yama, the king of death (on Sabitri Brata day)
6. Naga Loka - the abode of snakes (on Kaliya Dalan day)
7. Graha Loka - the abode of planets (on Sankranti days when the sun take a new sign of the Zodiac)

On Rath Yatra day every year, not only do people come from all over the world but also beings from all Lokas and planets. Lord Jagannath's chariot known as NANDIGHOSHA, is guarded by the following Devas :

1. The Flag by Hanuman from Mahatala Loka.
2. The Chariot itself by a being from Bitala Loka.
3. The Rope by Vasuki from Patala Loka.
4. The Wheels by Mother Vim ala from Sakti Loka.
5. The Entrance by Gatekeepers Jaya and Vljaya from Divya Loka.
6. The devas surrounding the Chariot being Rama, Laxman, Krishna, Nrusingha, Narayana, Chintamani, Yoga Maya, and Kubera all from Devaloka.
7. The sages all around the Chariot being Narada, Vyasa, Suka, Parasar, Rudra, Vashista and Viswamitra all from Pitru Loka.

The chariots of Balabhadra and Subhadra are guarded by many divine beings also. Some of the most mysterious phenomena reported from time to time by the people of Puri, especially the worshippers of Jagannath Temple, are as follows:

Not only do people from all over the world come to see Lord Jagannath, but so do gods and goddesses. It is believed that these devas are most fond of seeing the last ceremony of the day known as Pahuda, in which Lord Jagannath retires to bed. This occurs some time after midnight. Three beautiful beds made of ivory and decorated with the sweetest-smelling flowers, especially white jasmine, are brought before the deities. Flowers are scattered all over the beds to the sound of devotional music, and the miniature golden forms of Jagannath, Subhadra, and Balabhadra are laid down on the beds to sleep, actually a miniature, Gopi Krishna with Radha for Jagannath, and also the same for Subhadra. Then *arati*, the offering of a Dipa lamp, is done and flowers are scattered all around overhead to be collected by the gods and goddesses as a token of Lord Jagannath's blessing. So it is also the duty of all the gods and goddesses to be present at the time of this ceremony every night.

One night goddess Charchika of the distant village of Banki arrived late to the function. She was excused by Jagannath, who excuses all mistakes, but Balabhadra did not excuse her. "Mother do you think that the rituals of this temple should take place according to your convenience? You have become too proud these last few days. Get out ! You cannot come to see the Pahuda ceremony any more." In anger she replied 'I am not the proud one! You are the one who is ostentatious, being gorgeously dressed, bedecked with royal robes, golden ornaments, and sweet-smelling flowers. I have eight hands, but you with no hands think you are doing everything. Who is



the proud one? You please let me pass so that I may meet my Lord. Why are you ostracizing me for such a little offense? After that Balabhadra became more angry and lost His temper. "Your misbehaviour to Bitarachha Mahapatra, the chief priest is of grave concern. I am ordered by him to prevent you from entering the temple any more. How can you go and protect 'your area Banki, even with your eight hands with weapons, if you have no discipline?" Charchika replied, "Oh, then please go and ask Him to forgive me! I will not have any peace if I am deprived of the Lord's vision. I will be happy again only when I am redeemed."

Charchika was left standing there at the bottom of Baishipabachha, the twenty-two steps leading to the temple. The whole night was passing and her heart became very agitated. It was almost morning. The Sevakas were coming from the temple. Devas from all corners of the world had come that night, as was the custom every night to consult with Jagannath, the Lord of the universe. Now they were going out to execute His will. Only Charchika was left standing at the gate. If a Deva neglects his duty, he may cause harm to others and must be replaced. The sin of too much pride is almost irremediable. Just as Charchika was remembering this, Balabhadra came back with the sad news not to allow her inside. Balabhadra delivered the message of Lord Jagannath. "A proud Deva should not be admitted. If you wish to redeem yourself, render service in the home of Bitarachha Mahapatra, the head priest to whose function you came late, and not to me. Bitarachha Mahapatra alone can exonerate you, if he so desires and is pleased with your service." Balabhadra explained, "By the practice of virtuous deeds an ordinary man ascends upwards and may eventually attain the status of a demigod. Such a good soul may be regarded as equal to God himself, but only

because of his goodness, not his high position. Do you know this, Mother?" Charchika replied, "Yes, I have done wrong. I myself will take on the task of serving this man Bitarachha Mahapatra, even though I am a goddess of the highest order. It is the right punishment for a degraded goddess. I will be serving a man who is himself a servant of Lord Jagannath. Let me leave this place before others come out."

Disguising herself as a young widow in a white Sari, Charchika left the temple for the house of Bitarachha Mahapatra. As she approached, she saw the old man sitting on his front steps. So she quickly covered her face with her Sari piece and respectfully stood at some distance. The old man looked up and thought, "Who is this lady? I can see only half of her face, but she looks so young and radiant! I have never seen her in this area before." Thinking like this, he called to her. "Mother, have you come to our house or are you looking for someone in this neighbourhood. The soft motherly appearance of Charchika made Bitarachha Mahapatra regard her as a mother. Charchika pleaded, "I pray that you accept me in your house as a servant, as I have no other means of survival, Father. As I lay flat on the ground before Lord Jagannath, He himself ordered me to serve here in your house". The old man was astonished and with tears in his eyes, he answered, "This is your own home, you are so like my own mother. A son can never be reluctant to provide shelter to his mother."

Thus Charchika became the maid-servant of the head priest Bitarachha Mahapatra. Gradually she became accustomed to the household affairs of the family and took full charge of the puja room herself, cleaning the brass puja articles, changing the dress of the deities daily, and lighting the lamps. So perfectly did she act out the role of mother that Bitarachha Mahapatra hardly thought of his own mother, who had just



recently died. Time passed. Bitarachha's wife was old and ailing and so she was very pleased with Charchika's help and good manners. Sometimes people wondered about Charchika, Who was she? Where did she come from? Sometimes Charchika would be overcome with feeling when there was talk of Lord Jagannath, What was the reason for this? They would ask her, "Why don't you go to the temple and have darshan of Lord Jagannath? When so many people come from far away to see Him, you are nearby and do not go?" Charchika said sadly. "It is a matter of luck, sometimes one is not destined to meet him. I will visit the Lord wherever he showers his mercy on me."

One day a huge storm hit Puri with heavy rain. The whole town was enveloped in darkness. Bitarachha Mahapatra struggled to find his way home and finally reached the door, knocking loudly. Charchika responded anxiously. "Oh, what a treacherous night to be out! When it fell dark I lit a candle and sat waiting, expecting you at any moment. That candle has just now gone out." The head priest had come from the temple and was completely rain drenched. He handed over the Mahaprasad to Charchika and went to change his dress. But there were no matches to light the candle in his room. Neither did he bring a candle from the temple, as it was raining too heavily. With surprise he asked, "How did you light that candle, when there were no matches and all the neighbours had already gone to bed? Can you light another one?" Charchika replied, "Yes there is a way. Allow me to light the room." She immediately assumed her original form. She stretched one of her legs to the top of the temple where a lamp was burning and with it she lit the priest's candle !

On seeing this divine vision, Mahapatra almost fell senseless. He could not believe his eyes. How could this maid servant assume such

a divine miraculous form ? And so vast and glorious it was. The whole town of Puri could be accommodated within the space between her feet. A deep sense of awe and wonder overcame him. Charchika came back to her normal form in a moment's time, and the room was lit. Mahapatra felt as if his eyes had betrayed him and he was going mad. "Do not worry, father," Charchika said, Bitarchha Mahapatra fell before her, pleading, "Oh Mother ! Please reveal your real identity. I will not leave your feet until you do so." Such rare display of God's divine grace thrilled the priest through and through. His body became numb.

So Charchika disclosed everything to him, especially the reasons why she was cast out of the temple. Mahapatra exclaimed, "Oh Mother, please go back to your original abode. I will get due permission from the Lord for your reinstatement." With such assurance, Carclka disappeared from Bitarachha's house. It was after midnight, the rain had stopped. It was as if everything had occurred in accordance with God's plan. Charchika once again approached the main gate of the temple and Balabhadra offered her a welcome smile. Because of this, Charchika realised that one cannot retain even his position as a demigod if he does not fulfill his assigned duties and commitments for the upliftment of the world, for these are the duties of the demigod. Lord Jagannath ordered, "I am now very happy with you. I will assign you an additional responsibility, that of caring for My own car during Rath Yatra, the great Festival of Chariots. Even though the regular Sevakas are there to look after N andighosa, you will be its Deva." Charchika was silent and only nodded her head affectionately, then left. It was already morning and Bitarchha Mahapatra appeared before the deities to offer his regular service.



This event occurred in the year 1368. Before Goddess Charchika left the house of the head priest Bitarachha Mahapatra, she asked him what he wanted. He answered that he had no demands for any worldly things, but only wanted to see her again. She said, "Go to your Puja room;" and then vanished. He went there and saw protruding from the floor a framed stone image of the Deva herself. Even today, some six centuries later, this holy image is there and Puja is still being done to it daily by the descendants of Bitarachha Mahapatra, the head priest of Jagannath Temple.

Many more mysterious phenomena may be given in this respect. Personal experiences of worshippers and devotees can be given as proof of the divine Leelas of Lord Jagannath in their lives. Lord Jagannath is not just a deity made of wood but like a human being, He hears, but has

no ears, He sees, but has no eyes. He speaks, but has no tongue. He helps, but has no feet to walk.

Lord Jagannath has Love for all. He will speak to anyone and come to the rescue of anyone. He can even change one's destiny as He guides us on the right path. Only we must have the eyes to see Him, the ears to hear Him, the hands to help Him ! This is the only qualification. Then we have a heart to heart connection with Him and in our small limited world we can know Him.

- Jay Jagannath -

Somanath Khuntia, Manikarnika Sahi, Hazuri Lane, Puri-752001.





Administration of Shri Jagannath Temple under Marathas and British Rule

Mahimohan Tripathy

Mukunda Harichandan, the last independent Hindu King of Odisha was killed in a battle with the invading Afghan Sultan of Bengal in 1568 A.D. Then Odisha came under the Afghan rule. This rule came to an end when Mansingh, a General of Emperor Akbar came to Odisha in 1590 and defeated the Afghans. Consequently Odisha was included in the Moghul empire. After the death of Mukunda Harichandan, Ramachandra Dev (I) of Bhoi dynasty carved out a small kingdom on the ruins of the Odisha Gajapati empire and made Khurda its Capital. He came under this suzerainty of the Moghul Emperor. The period under the Afghans and the Moghuls was a period of tyranny, especially for Lord Jagannath and the temple.

In 1741, Alivardi Khan, Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Odisha defeated Murshid Quli-II, Naib Nazim of Odisha. Mir Habib, a trusted officer of Murshid Quli joined the Marathas and persuaded them to attack Bengal. Odisha was finally ceded to the Marathas in 1751 by Alivardi. The Muslim rule ended in Odisha by a treaty of Alivardi with the Marathas.

Marathas Rule :

The first two Governors under Marathas were Muslims. In 1760, Sheo Bhatt Sathe became the first Maratha Subahdar till 1764.

Ramachandra Dev was dethroned by Raja Padmanava Dev of Patia with the help of Mir Habib. Padmanava reigned for 3/4 years and was expelled by Birakeshari Dev-I, son of Ramachandra Dev. Birakeshari's regnal period was from 1736 to 1793 A.D.

When the Marathas under Sheo Bhatt assumed direct administration of Odisha, Jagannath Narayan Dev, the Raja of Parlakhemundi of Odisha claimed to be the legitimate descendent of Imperial Gangas. Birakeshari sought the assistance of the Marathas to drive out the invader and promised to pay them rupees one lakh for such assistance. But Birakeshari failed to pay the stipulated sum and instead, gave four mahals or *pergunahs* to the Marathas. He not only lost four *pergunahs* but also the control over the management of the Jagannath temple, situated in one of such *pergunahs*.

As Mr. Kulke has stated "The Rajas of Khurda seem to have retained only a nominal position as Gajapatis in the Jagannath cult xxxx the control over the Jagannath cult had passed completely into the hands of group of temple administrators which were appointed by the Marathas". During the time of Maratha Subahadar Rajaram Pandit (1778-1793),



Birakeshari Dev became mad and murdered four of his sons. The Subahdar imprisoned him in Barabati fort at Cuttack. His son Dibyasingha Dev-II was made Raja of Khurda on the condition that an annual tribute to the tune of rupees ten thousand would be paid to the Marathas by him.

During the time of Birakeshari many new temples were constructed and old ones renovated in the State. The Jagannath temple was again lime-plastered. The Ratnavedi of the temple was renovated. A small statute of Birakeshari is found in the front side wall of the Ratnavedi. Also his name has been inscribed there. In Birakeshari's time, the Odia literature flourished under royal patronage to such an extent that it would not be an exaggeration to say that it was the golden age of Odia literature. The Raja was himself a poet. Authorship of some famous devotional songs in Odia is attributed to him. The writer of this essay has found an epic in palm-leaf manuscript named as 'Rasataranga' of this Raja and got it edited and printed.

As the Maratha rulers were Hindus, they guarded the interests of the temple. They made good the deficit due to excess of expenditure over income. The main sources of income of the temple during the Maratha rule were (1) Revenue from Sateis Hazari Mahal (2) Sayer or two duties (3) Tax on professions (4) Sale of mahaprasad (5) Kot khanjah or assignment of land revenue. The Maratha Government recouped the money spent on the temple by continuing the pilgrim tax, which was imposed by the Muslims. A tax on Pratiharis was also levied, who were allowed to collect fees from the pilgrims. Certain categories of pilgrims such as sanyasis (mendicants), the deseers (who lived in the holy land between the Baitarani and Rishikulya rivers) and the kangals (paupers) were exempted from payment of the pilgrim tax.

During the Maratha rule, the day to day administration of the temple was vested in three Parichhas. For some years there were four Parichhas. The names of the Parichhas as per the Grome's report dated 10.06.1805 were Morar Pandit (head Parichha), Jagannath Rajguru (2nd Parichha) and Shewaji Ungits (3rd Parichha).

Gajapati Dibyasingh Dev-II was loyal to the Marathas. During his time, the Jagannath temple was again plastered. Jhulan Yatra was introduced in the temple. The Arun Pillar was brought from Konark and installed in front of main gate of the Jagannath temple.

Dibyasingh Dev was succeeded by his son Mukunda Dev-II (1798-1817).

In 1757, the British East India Company was granted the revenue diwani of Bengal, Bihar, Odisha by the Moghul Emperor Shah Alam. The Company wanted to annex Odisha in order to connect Bengal with their possessions in South India. In 1766, Lord Clive asked the Marathas as to whether they would cede Odisha to the Company for an annual tribute. The Maratha king Januji Bhonsla agreed for ceding on certain conditions. The main condition was that the Jagannath temple and the duties collected from the temple should be with the Marathas. The Company Government did not agree to the conditions and after all attempts failed, they prepared for a war against the Marathas to occupy the province of Cuttack (Odisha). Their attempt to conquer Odisha started from the southern (Ganjam) side under the command of Lt. Col. Campbell. Lord Welleselly, the British Governor-General, issued instructions to Lt. Col. Campbell as to how to deal with the pagoda of Jagannath, the priests and the people. Lord Welleselly had instructed, 'On your arrival at Jaggenaut, you will employ every possible



precautions to preserve the respect due to the Pagoda and to the religious prejudices of the Brahmins and pilgrims. You will furnish the Brahmins with such guards as shall afford perfect security to their persons, rites and ceremonies and to the sanctity of the religious edifices and you will enjoin these under your command to observe your orders on this important subject with the utmost degree of accuracy and vigilance. "The British troops crossed the Odisha borders and entered Puri on the 18th September 1803 without resistance.

British Rule :

After the conquest, the Company was administered by a Board of Commissioners for the affairs of Cuttack (Odisha). The province was divided into two divisions, James Hunter was deputed as the collector of Jaggernaut (Puri) or south- division to collect revenue and to superintendent the temple affairs. In September 1805, the two divisions were amalgamated into one district under the charge of one Judge-Magistrate and one collector. Hunter was appointed as the collector of pilgrim tax at Puri. For some years after the conquest, the British managed the temple directly following the same system of management as that of the Marathas. They made good the deficit in the income of the temple. But the pilgrim tax which was abolished soon after the conquest was reintroduced in January, 1806. When Lt. Col. Harcourt, the Commissioner visited the Car festival in July 1804, the priests received him favourably.

Gajapati Mukunda Dev helped the Company and allowed their troops to pass through his territory. The Raja was offered Rupees one lakh by the Company for military cooperation. He had hoped that the Company after their conquest of the province would hand over to him

the four *pergunahs* which were taken by the Marathas. But Harcourt was not willing to spare even "a span of land".

Mukunda Dev and his Dewan Jayi Rajguru were very much disappointed at the dubious role of the British. They made secret negotiations with the Marathas and some tributary Gadjat Chiefs to regain influence in the Puri temple. They strengthened the internal defence of Khurda. The Khurda troops raided the bordering region of Pipili. Mukunda Dev sent his men to collect land revenue from the *mahals* or *pergunahs* which were not restored to him by the Company. The rebellion of Khurda Raja was suppressed by Lt. Col. Harcourt. His army destroyed the Khurda fort. Mukunda Dev was taken prisoner to Cuttack and then Midnapur. Dewan Jayi Rajguru was hanged in full public view. The entire Khurda territory was confiscated by the Company. As per the proclamation dated 7.12.1807 of Harcourt, the Killa and the country of Khurda had, 'come into the possession and enjoyment of the victorious army of the honourable company' and had been included in the moghulbandi. Thus came to an end the glorious tradition of Gajapati Kings of Odisha.

The British thought of managing the temple directly with a committee of Pandits or Parichhas. But the internal affairs of the temple could not be managed effectively and the Parichhas were reported to be unfit for such responsibility. As the Company Government was a Christian government, they experienced practical difficulties in managing the internal affairs of the temple. The Christian officers were prohibited entry into the temple. After a prolonged contemplation for an alternative arrangement, the ultimate choice fell upon Raja Mukunda Dev who was under confinement at Midnapur. The Raja was released and ordered to stay at Puri. The



Raja, in the meantime had expressed his loyalty to the British. By regulation IV of 1809, the Raja was appointed as the Superintendent of the temple and thereby the direct administration of the temple by the East India Company came to an end. Certain restrictions were imposed on the authority of the Raja. He and his successors were to hold the position so long as they conducted themselves with integrity, diligence and propriety and were liable to removal by the Government on the ground of misconduct. But the Government retained the power of appointing and dismissing the temple Parichhas. The Government realised money from the pilgrims and paid money for the establishment charges of the temple and scrutinized the accounts. Thus, a diarchy in the administration of the temple was introduced.

In early 1817, the Paikas (landed militia) of the former Khurda state under the leadership of the Khandaitas revolted against the British for the ruthless character of the British revenue system. They had been allowed to enjoy hereditary 'Jagirs' during the Muslim and Maratha rule. The Company deprived their privileges in their service lands by assessing them at the same rate as the other tillers of the land. The Khandaitas lost the 'haupani tax' which they were entitled to collect from the inhabitants in their 'mahals' for maintaining law and order. They fell into arrears of unpaid revenue owing to increase in assessment. It is stated that the invariable result of this mortgaging was the loss of the land which was auctioned in Cuttack and Calcutta where Odisha soon had become a favourite ground for speculators.

Buxi Jagabandhu, a General of Raja Mukunda Dev, who lost his valuable Rorang estate and privileges, organized an open revolt which spread over soon in Khurda, Banapur and Puri. These places were conquered and the British

offices looted. The insurgents declared the Raja of Khurda as their ruler. The revolt was suppressed in April 1817 by Capt. Le Fabre. The Raja and his son were arrested and were kept as prisoners in the Barabati fort of Cuttack. Buxi Jagabandhu surrendered after eight years and was kept confined at Cuttack on a monthly pension. There he died in January, 1829. Mukunda Dev died in November, 1817 at Cuttack.

Ramachandra Dev-III succeeded his father Mukunda Dev-II. He was instructed to stay at Puri and was appointed as the Temple Superintendent. With a view to compensating the Raja for his loss of the Khurda estate, the British Government paid him an allowance of Rs.25,600/- per annum for his maintenance. The allowance was called 'malikana', but subsequently phrased as 'political pension'. Each successive Puri Raja had been getting that political pension, but the amount of pension had not been enhanced since 1819.

Despite vesting in the Raja the power of superintendence, the propaganda of the Christian missionaries and their supporters in Britain and India continued against the British Government's "connections with idolatry" and imposition of pilgrim tax- an "official sanction of superstition". The critics succeeded at last.

The Act-X of 1840, passed on 20.4.1840 abolished the pilgrim tax. By order of the Collector of Puri, collection of any tax from the pilgrims was prohibited with effect from the 3rd May, 1840. The Act also provided that the superintendence of the temple of Jagannath and its interior economy, the conduct and the management of its affairs and the control over the priests, officers and servants attached to the temple, should continue to be vested in the Raja of Khurda (i.e. Puri) for the time being.



The Government continued to contribute annually on an average of Rs.53,000/- to meet the expenses of the temple. The Government handed over to the Raja some estates in lieu of annual payments. In 1843 the estate, Sateis Hazari Mahal comprising 90 villages and yielding an annual rental of Rs.17,420/- was made over. In 1858 and 1863, some villages (156) constituting the Ekhrajat Mahal were transferred to the Raja for maintenance of the temple, peace and order. All future cash payments were stopped.

By 1840, the annual money payments were fixed at Rs.23,321/-. In 1856, the cost of maintenance of police force within and around the temple amounting to Rs.6,804/- was deducted and the allowance, otherwise known as Khairat allowance was fixed at Rs.16,517/-. In 1859 the Court of Directors decided that the Superintendent (i.e. the Raja) should also be responsible for preservation of peace inside the temple and a sum of Rs.6,804/- then paid directly to the police should be paid to the Superintendent until such time as a transfer of lands yielding an equivalent sum could be effected. By the deeds dated 3.4.1858 and 26/30.3.1863, lands were transferred to the temple, which yielded Rs.23,321/-.

Ramachandra Dev-III who died in 1854, was succeeded by his son Birakeshari Dev-II (also called Birakishore). Birakeshari passed away untimely in November 1859, leaving behind his widow Rani Suryamani Patmahadei and an adopted son (a child of about four years). He was the first child of the Zamindar of Bada Khemundi. By a will, Rani Suryamani was made the guardian of all properties and was empowered to conduct the affairs of the temple during the minority of her adopted son. She was authorized to adopt another son in the event of the death of the adopted son. She obtained a certificate from

the Civil Court appointing her the guardian of the minor and his estates, under Act XL of 1858.

The management of the temple during the superintendence of the Rani was reportedly not satisfactory. The situation went from bad to worse when the minor son Dibyasingh Dev-II came of age and became the Superintendent. He grew up wayward and was addicted to drugs. He neglected his duties in the temple and did not pull on well with the priests and the attendants. For the mismanagement of the temple, eleven persons were crushed to death during the Dola and Govinda Dwadasi festivals in February, 1877. In 1878 on the charge of murdering a Sadhu, Dibyasingh Dev was convicted and sentenced to transportation for life to Andaman Jail. He died there. Dibyasingh Dev who received the title of "Maharaja" from the British Government in 1877, became an Andaman convict next year !

As evident from the official records of that time, the transportation of the Raja brought about a very anomalous state of things in as much as under Act X of 1840, the superintendence of the temple remained with the Raja, even after his transportation. The Government desired to recover a portion of the Khurda Estate with a rental of Rs.23,716/- which was made over to the Raja as Superintendent giving in exchange of Rs.30,000/- a year, the object of the proposed commutation being to save the raiyats from oppression and to facilitate management of the Government property at Khurda. Keeping this in view, it was proposed to the Government of India that an Act should be passed vesting the management in an honorary committee associated with a Manager appointed by the Government. After prolonged discussions it was decided by the Government of India to repeal Act X of 1840, and to amend section 539 of the Civil Procedure Code, so as to bring any trust created for religious purposes within the purview of that section. A suit



was ordered to be instituted for the purpose of declaring vacant the office of Superintendent of the temple and its interior economy held by the convict Raja and to get a decree to appoint new trustees under the Trust and to settle a scheme for its management. Accordingly, a scheme of management was prepared by Mr. K.G. Gupta, acting Collector of Puri in 1883 and submitted to the Government for approval.

On the institution of the suit, a number of memorials were sent to the Government for its withdrawal. The “cry of religion in danger”, was so successfully raised in the vernacular press that the suit was abandoned under certain terms of compromise. Mr. Madhusudan Das, a great Odia Advocate, appeared for the Rani. According to the terms of the compromise, ‘the right of superintendence of the temple continues in Raja Mukunda Deva but during his minority, his grandmother and guardian, Rani Suryamani shall exercise the rights of superintendence on behalf of the minor till the minor comes of age. During the period of her management, she shall delegate to such manager all the powers which she exercises over the Sevaks of the temple provided that the Manager shall not be competent to dismiss any Sevak without the sanction of the Rani. In case the Rani dismisses a Manager, she should appoint another within a reasonable time, failing which the Civil Court shall appoint a competent Manager to the said vacancy. The duties of the Manager were specified in the compromise. The decree shall cease to have force on the minor Raja’s coming of age’.

The compromise was made in 1888 and ceased to have any force in 1897, when Raja Mukunda Dev attained his majority.

The following persons worked as Manager of the temple during the period 1889 to 1926.

1889 to 1890 - Harekrushna Das
 1890 to 1893 - Krushnachandra Mohanty
 1893 - R.K. Kundu (for a short time)
 1893 to 1895 - J.N. Chaudhury
 1895 - Nityananda Das (for a short time)
 1898 - Mr. Price (Ex-LC.S.) (for a short time)
 1900 - Mr. Price (Ex-LC.S.) again for a short time.
 1900 (May) to 1900 (October) - Chintamani Patnaik
 1900 (October) - Rasbihari Naik (for a short time)
 1903 (May) to 1913 (May) - Rajkishore Das
 1913 (May) to 1917 (May) - Gourshyam Moharity
 1917 (May) to 1921 (May) - Balamukunda Kanoongo
 1921 (May) to 1925 (May) - Sakhi Chand
 1925 (May) to 1926 (August) - Lala Asutosh

The compromise was a victory of Rani Suryamani. As stated by Prof. P. Mukherjee “Rani Suryamani was undoubtedly a woman of keen intelligence and strong personality. Though a purdha lady, she revived the prestige of the Puri Raja family. She practically forced the government of India to confer the title of Raja on Mukunda Dev, during the life time of his father. She united all sections of people to rally round the cause of Raja of Puri xxxx”. She became widow at an early age. “She was expected to live sixty years in recluse, but destiny ordained otherwise. She became the custodian of the Jagannath temple and of the Puri Raj estates from 1860 to 1897, except for the brief period 1875 to 1878, when Dibyasingh Deva took charge.”

“She learnt from experience. During the long minority of Mukunda Deva, there was not much complaint regarding the temple administration.” Her Advocate Mr. Madhusudan Das thwarted the attempt of the Government to reduce the power and prestige of the Superintendent of the temple by bringing the temple administration under a committee. Though a Christian by choice, he became a spokesman of the Odia-Hindus and helped the Rani and her



grandson to a great extent in management of the temple affairs.

After Mukunda Dev came of age, Rani Suryamani "faded away from the pages of history". She passed away in 1926.

Mukunda Dev proved to be inefficient. He took little interest in the temple affairs. On Mahastami day, the 20th October 1901, in the Pokharia of the temple, a fatal accident occurred resulting in two persons being trampled to death and several others being seriously injured. This accident was attributed to the incompetence, apathy and mismanagement of the Superintendent of the temple. As stated by Mr. Garret (Jt. Magistrate) in his report dt. 30.12.1901, the Raja became a prey in the hands of a low caste married and maimed woman, nick named 'Khandi'. He donated her a lot of property.

To check the mismanagement of the temple, a senior Deputy Magistrate Rai Bahadur Rajkishore Das was appointed as Manager during the time of Mukunda Dev. Mukunda Dev died on 11.2.1926. His adopted son Ramachandra Dev-IV became the Superintendent of the temple. Birakishore Dev succeeded his father Ramachandra Dev in 1956.

Ramachandra Dev was the last superintendent of the temple during the British rule and the first after the independence. During his incumbency, Government of Odisha enacted the Puri Shri Jagannath Temple (Administration) Act,

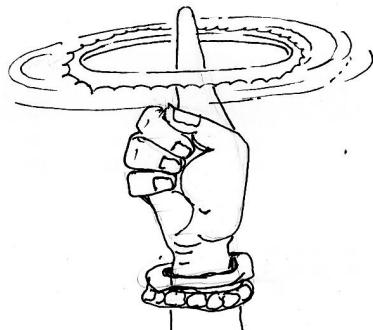
1952 and Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955 to avert abject mismanagement of the temple.

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Lord Sri Sudarsan

Balakrishna Dash



Sri Jagannath is none else than the Lord of the Universe. He is the apostle of humanism, a cult of universal brotherhood, love, tolerance, equality and fraternity. The cult of Sri Jagannath is not a sectarian religion but a cosmopolitan one having eclectics philosophy. Through ages, it has embraced all types of spiritual thoughts starting from primitive Sabar tribal to ultra modern religion like Krushna consciousness. It has solaced devotees right from so called untouchable low castes, Mohammedanism, Jainism, Sikhism to even Christianity. Jagannathism is a pleasant synthesis of Vaisnavism, Shaivism, Shikhism, Saurism. Since Sri Jagannath is considered as no other than Lord Vishnu, Sri Balabhadra as Lord Shiva, Devi Subhadra as Parashakti Ambika while Sri Sudarsan as Lord Aditya (Bhaskar/Surya). Sri Jagannath alone is shaped as “Chaturddha Murti” or Four-fold Daru-Brahma Who is the centre of the cult that has dominated Odishan life, art, culture and in the sense it synthesizes all the major cults of India.

Legend goes like this :- With the end of Dwapara Yuga Lord Krishna and Lord Balaram left the world for their heavenly abode. King Indradyumna of Malava came to know about the great God Neel Madhab, the other shape of Lord Sri Krishna in Kali Yuga from Vidyapati one of his Brahmin Ministers who was sent to Udradesa (Odisha). When Indradyumna came and searched for the Lord, he could not be able to get the trace of him but heard a voice from the heaven to perform Yajna at the sea shore (Banki Muhan) to get the sacred tree having four branches known as “Daru Brahma” out of which

he would get “Neel Madhab” in the shape of Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra, Lord Jagannath and Lord Sudarsan and to worship them constructing a gigantic temple of paramount beauty at Nilachal. As such we see Lord Sri Krishna as Lord Jagannath, Lord Shiva as Lord Balabhadra, Goddess Parashakti Jogmaya as Devi Subhadra and the discuss (Chakra) as Lord Sudarsan, at Srikshetra Puri on the “Ratna Singhasan” (Skanda Puran).

Thus, Lord Sudarsan is part and parcel of “Chaturddha Murti” Daru-Brahma otherwise known as Vishnu Ayudha, Neela Chakra, Srichakra, Adi Murti and many other names. Some stories are available about the origin of this great weapon worshipped as Lord Sudarsan.

1) The Sun married “Sangyan” the daughter of Viswakarma. Sangyan once complained to her father that she could not bear the radiance of the Sun. Viswakarma put the Sun in a turning machine to minimize his radiance. Out of the dust of the radiance of the Sun produced by this process Viswakarma made the great weapon the discus (Chakra), the arial chariot “Puspaka”, the trivalent (Trishul) of Shiva, the lens (Shakti) of Lord Kartika (Subramanyamswami). Of those weapons and Chariot, the weapon discus known as Sudarsan was given to Mahavishnu. (Vishnu Purana-Chapter-2)

2) During the burning of the forest (Khandab) Indra showered rains against the fire to extinguish it. According to story, the God (Agni) (Fire) gave the discus weapon (Sudarsan) to Sri Krishna and the bow (Gandib) to Arjuna



to fight against Indra as burning of “Khandaban” was essential for cure of the God Agni (Fire) from the disease “Beriberi”. Lastly Indra was defeated and the God Agni (Fire) could be able to burn the “Khandav Bana” to ashes.

Besides these stories several stories in various Puranas are available about this great weapon “Sudarsan”. As Sudarsan was in existence even before the incarnation of Lord Sri Krishna, the story that Viswakarma made it ought to be given prominence very often as Mahavishnu used to destroy enemies (wicked) by this weapon. Though Mahavishnu had taken several incarnations, only Sri Krishna is mentioned in the Puranas as having used this weapon Sudarsan as He was taken as full incarnation (having Sholakalas) of Mahavishnu. (Mahabharat).

A legend goes like this:- Lord Sri Krishna was suffering from pangs of separation with beloved Gopies and Bhabamayee Sri Radha. Once his queens developed fascination to hear Rasaleela of Lord Sri Krishna with Gopies from mother Rohini. Subhadra was advised to become the door-keeper and to restrict the entry of others inside. Rohini went on telling the celestial position as of Sri Krishna and Gopies of Brindavan. Tears rolled down her cheeks. Meanwhile Sri Krishna and Balaram came to hear mother Rohini. They were obstructed by their sister Subhadra to enter inside and managed to stand by her sides. Both the brothers and sister were absorbed in deep meditation on hearing celestial pastimes. Their bodies started melting like wax. The limbs started disappearing and eyes got widened. Sudarsan the weapon of Lord Krishna was also transformed to a post (a straight big stick). Meanwhile Devarshi Narad descended from heaven and got astonished beholding the appearance of all out of ecstasy. He begged a boon from Lord Krishna that both the brothers, sister and discus Sudarsan in the above forms be worshipped on Ratna Singhasan of Sri Mandir at Sri Kshetra, Puri as four-fold deities (Chaturddha Murti) to grant emancipation to the devotees from vices. It was

accordingly granted. Now we see Sri Balabhadra Who is identified with Balaram of Dwapar Yuga, Sri Jagannath as Sri Krishna, Devi Subhadra as sister of Lord Sri Krishna and Sri Sudarsan as the weapon seated on the left side of Sri Krishna on the Ratna Singhasan (Mahabharat).

Sudarsan has the supreme power of flying up to the ranks of wicked, burning like fire. Emanating light and radiance from the blazing fire, the Sudarsan rests on the hand of Lord Vishnu; turning round with a tremendous speed. The weapon which is burning in great flames like a great fire spreading radiance plays into the midst of the wicked and instantly every one here falls dead. Thus it flies about among the wicked and burns them to ashes. Then revolving round and round in the air it drinks the blood-shed on the earth. (Mahabharat/Adipurana).

At Sri Kshetra Sri Sudarsan is taken as a part of Daru-Brahma the four-fold deities. He is the Agravuja (worshipped first).

*“Sudarsan Madimurte Sarbesam Moksha Dayaka,
Sarba Roga Hara Santa Chakra Raj Namameham”*
(Niladri Mahadaya)

During Snana and Gundicha Yatra He proceeds ahead before other deities (viz-Sri Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Sri Jagannath) in Dhadi Pahandi and returns like-wise in Goti-Pahandi. So also during Nabakalevar the “Daru” (sacred tree) of Sri Sudarsan is first searched and after due performance of Yajna taken to Koili Baikuntha for construction of the idol. Apart from this on the full moon days of “Gamha Purnima” other-wise known as “Balabhadra-Janma”, Kumar Purnima” and on “Radhastami”, Sri Sudarsan only visits Rusi-Ashramas, Markandeswar, Anjirasa Ashram and Janhimundi of Sri Jameswar respectively as the representative of Sri Jagannath to solace the devotees those are incapable of visiting temple.

-JAI SHREE JAGANNATHA -

Balakrishna Dash, Chaitanya Vihar, Near Bus stand,
Shree Mandir, Puri.



Shree Jagannatha in the Writings of Ganakabi Baishnab Pani

Ganakabi Baishnab Pani (1882-1956) is a legend in Odia literary and folk tradition. Between 1903 and 1940, he not only wrote about 600 'geeti-natya' (folk opera) but also directed and staged their performances across Odisha and Bengal. As far as Odia folk opera (*Jatra*) is concerned, he was a pioneer in many ways. He rejuvenated this rich tradition with his multi-faceted talent and single-minded dedication. Unfortunately, he did not receive the recognition during his life time. As a true artist, despite a series of problems and sufferings he had to undergo in his personal life, he had the pleasure of entertaining and enlightening thousands of ecstatic audience through the performances he staged for nearly 50 years.

Born in a poor Brahmin family in the village Kothapada (in Mahanga Block), he was christened as Satrughna by his parents. He was an ailing child. He was dedicated to great banyan tree of Matha Bada Chhata in Puri for his well-being and there his name was changed to Baishnab.

Later, he joined school in his village but had to drop out in Class-VII. He was indeed a gifted child and was fond of singing. He continued his study with the help of village elders. It is said, he not only had a good command over Odia language and literature but also studied Sanskrit.

Sarojini Pani



Over years he became a popular 'paalaagaayaka'.

Baishnab was a devotee of his village deity 'Binod-Bihari' (Krishna) and visited the temple regularly. It is believed that his literary talent was due to the blessings of Binod-Bihari and with the blessings of the lord he wrote his first book 'Meghanad Badha' (an episode from Ramayan) in 1903. With the resounding success of this *Jatra*, Baishnab Pani never looked back. Soon, his books were adopted to performances by village artists across the state, Baishnab Pani became a house-hold name.

Baishnab Pani's writings were mostly based on mythological plots and subjects but he gave a very different treatment to the stories by incorporating contemporary social, political and economic issues. He could very successfully incorporate messages against evil practices in the society like alcohol consumption, caste-based discrimination, ill treatment of women etc. He was particularly concerned about women empowerment issues like education for girls, bringing widows and prostitutes to the mainstream of the society. By using simple, colloquial Odia his dialogues were easily understood by the ordinary people. By appropriately blending humour and pathos, lyric and music he could create a bonding and dialogue with his audience,



which is uncommon. He was a powerful playwright as well as an accomplished director, music composer and singer.

As a Hindu Brahmin it is but natural for one to be God-fearing and religious. However, in the case of Ganakabi, he appears to be less religious but constantly in the company of Binod-Bihari, Krishna, Hari, Rama and Jagannatha. He has grown under the shadow of his village deity Binod-Bihari. At the same time he is eternally conscious of the fact that Jagannatha is the supreme God and He can also be referred to as Rama, Krishna or Hari. In fact, a whole lot of gods and goddesses were among the social characters he used in his plays for conveying useful messages to his audience and the society.

His ailing childhood, coupled with poverty and lack of opportunity, is no small reason to fall back on the God's grace. As he grew up he constantly faced harassment, malice and ostracism from his neighbours in the midst of physical and emotional suffering. It needs to be appreciated that he was a rebel but a humanist. He was a strong personality and he could take a bold decision like marrying an 'untouchable' without bothering about the social backlash. Not surprisingly, he drew his strength and inspiration from Lord Jagannatha—the supreme God, the lord of the universe.

His devotional songs and poems, published under the titles "Sri Jagannatha Janana", "Srikshetra Janana" and "Neelachala Chautisha", are of course offerings to the supreme God.

In his plays he invokes the gods and goddesses and also brings them as characters without appearing to be casual or superfluous. Jagannatha appears as a guide or a mentor or as an ordinary individual, destined to suffer the

consequence of the social practices, as we find Him in "Lakshmi Puja". But always we find Baishnab as an ideal devotee and an engrossed artist. He brings in the names of Vishnu, Hari and Krishna into his narrative with an effortless ease and contextual relevance.

In the *geeti-natya* "Raghu Arakshita", Ganakabi writes in the introduction:

"Vishnubhaktajana taranti kesane gai Srihari charita,
Bisha grasa krasa na badhiba tile sakshi Arakshita.
Haripurastha Krushna Mahapatra Arakshita tara sutta,
Gangadhara kanya Annapurna bibha hoi sarila samasta.

**** * * ***

*Bhiksha magi magi jogi beshe kshetra bare sheshe upagata,
Baishnaba Vishnu sebi sehitharu arambhiba e sangeeta."*

A free English translation of the Odia text is given below:

The devotees of Vishnu get a safe passage by reciting the greatness of Srihari/ Arakshita assures that even poison cannot harm one who takes name of Srihari. Arakshita is the son of Krushna Mahapatra of Haripura/ Gangadhar's daughter Annapurna got happily married.

*** * * ***

As a saint with a begging bowl in Srikshetra :-

Following the worship of Vishnu, Baishnab will start the song from there.

For Baishnab Pani, Sree Jagannatha is Vishnu. He is omnipresent and omnipotent. He is not only the lord of the universe but also the symbol of many social, cultural, spiritual and even political concepts and messages. Jagannatha is at the centre of Odia ethos.

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Pilgrim Management in the Sacred City of Puri

Dr. Bhaskar Mishra

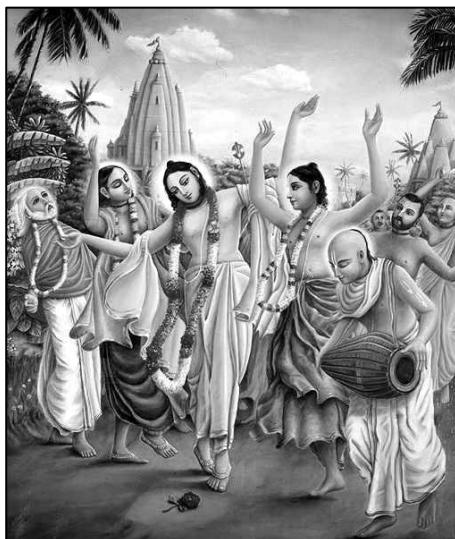
Purusottama Kshetra presently known as holy city Puri the soul of Odisha, is identified in the ethnographic map of India's east coast. It has been considered as one of the four Dhams (sacred religious place) in India, and in true sense, a high ranking pilgrimage destination. Since the days of antiquity, "Srikshetra" Puri Dham has gained prominence as a Holy place for Hindus.

Historically, holy city Puri bears the two great things i.e. Shri Jagannath Temple and most finest golden sand beaches known as 'Mahodadhi' in ancient Puranic literature. It stands as a symbol of beauty through the centuries and even to-day fascinating the pilgrims from all over the world. Over the centuries it has attracted people from far and wide, especially preachers, saints, philosophers, educationists and pilgrims from all over the world.

The history of the promotion of pilgrims and pilgrimage in India since ancient times to the present day is enriched with paradigmatic evidences which are found to be well transmitted in to the secular, non-secular literatures,

inscriptions, chronicles, public records and newspapers etc.

In ancient India, religion and learning were very closely intermingled and each Tirtha or holy place was also a centre of learning and culture. Though Puri as a Tirtha, mentioned in the



Vanaparva of the 'Mahabharata' and its sanctity and glory are elaborately described in the Kurma Purana, Skanda Purana, Brahma Purana, Kapila Samhita, Narada Purana, Padma Purana, Mahapurusa Bidya, Bama Dev Samhita, Neeladri Mahodaya etc, where one finds the references of this religious 'pitha'. Next, we come to the days of the great Acharya Sankara, who in course of his spiritual conquest of the whole

of India, stayed at Puri and founded one of his four Peethas called 'Govardhan Peetha' which has been existing till today, After the days of Sankaracharya, the greatness and sanctity of "Shri Purusottma" on the sea-shore near this sacred place spread throughout India. The construction of the present Jagannath temple in place of the small old dilapidated temple by imperial Ganga



king Gajapati Maharaja Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva in 12th Century A.D is a landmark in Odishan history. It can be safely said that from this period onwards, Puri became a famous centre of pilgrimage and saints, preachers, devotees, teachers, thinkers and general visitors are regularly coming from far off as well as nearby places.

The synthetic faith of Jagannath is an epitome of divergent religious creeds and schools of philosophy that prevailed in India at different periods of her long cultural history. In the historic process of adjustments, Shri Jagannath assimilated strange contradictions in a manner that is most amazing in the history of religious thought. There is no discarding of any human beings in this religion of human faith. Scholars like Pandit Nilakantha Dash opined that all the gods and goddesses have found a place here and mingled here. Thus, the religious system developed centering around, consciousness of Shri Jagannath Culture and faith which attracts all the saints, seers, kings and commons that become unique in many ways. The assimilation of religious faiths as we have discussed and its continuation with a huge temple at Puri has given a definite shape as a Tirtha Kshetra.

Here, the temple town becomes a centre of Vaisnava faith and elaborate arrangements have been made for the pilgrims since the historical times. The traditional Pandas (Sevayat) known as 'Tirthagurus' were kept in charge of pilgrims traditionally. For Hindus, a place of pilgrimage is a 'Tirtha' and the journey to such place it is called 'Tirthatana.' From ancient times, pilgrims from all parts of India even from Nepal used to come every year on various festive occasions to have 'darshan' of Lord Shri Jagannath at Purusottama Kshetra, Puri. These pilgrims have relationship with the Pandas or priests of Shri Jagannath Temple since long. From that time these Pandas or Tirthagurus

have been attending on such pilgrims and making all sorts of arrangements for convenient 'darshan' of the deities.

Three hundred years ago, the pilgrims and visitors coming to Srikshetra Puri used to enter the holy city through different 'ghats' (entry points). It is ascertained from 'Gangabansu charitam' that many pilgrims came through waterways, as there was no proper road communication system and reached Swargadwar near Puri sea-beach. They were cordially received by the Pratihari Sevayat who remained in charge of their 'darshan', travelling and 'Prasad' etc. That ancient procedure of attendance and hospitality to the pilgrims is still continuing in this sacred city Puri. In course of time other categories of Sebayats and non-sebayat Gumastas entered into the pilgrim trade. The Pandas or Tirthagurus used to go or send their Gumastas (employee) to the different parts of the country to disseminate the Jagannath culture and distribute the Mahaprasad in shape of Ninnalya, Tulsi, Khairachula, Jagannath Ballav etc. They also motivate different class of people to have a pilgrimage to Puri. Management of pilgrims by the pandas have taken the form of trade family business. The pands or tirthagurus take care of pilgrims starting from their arrival to departure from Puri, for which Pandas are well known for their hospitality towards pilgrims. According to the opinion of an eminent writer Sri Somanath Khuntia, Srimandir Sevayat of Puri, "A devotee is considered to be a member of the family of the Pandas and vice-versa. The devotees or pilgrims respect the Pandas and the Pandas by dint of their love and sacrifice become affectionate to the pilgrims coming from different places of India. So it will not be out of place to mention here that India is served and revered by the Trithagurus or Pandas of Shree Jagannath Temple for their wisdom, honesty, kindness, Sympathy, love, affection and human dealings.



"The pilgrims are also provided with accommodation either in the residence of Pandas or in the nearby Dharmasalas, Lodgings or Hotels. The name and detailed addresses of the pilgrims and their pre or post generations are being recorded in a binding register known as 'WARJA' and pilgrims may put their own signature or thumb impression in the register for the future generation of the pilgrims that could recognise the Tirthagurus.

In course of time, during festivals, particularly Ratha Yatra, large congregation of pilgrims was felt. In the year 1810, Raja Sukhamaya Ray of Bengal had taken a leading step for construction of the Jagannath Road, which facilitated pilgrims to come easily. In 1901, Railway line was opened to Puri. It was during 1841 - 1901, the pilgrim flow to the sacred city of Puri gradually increased.

Usually the pilgrims were staying for three to four days. They first take a bath in the Mahodadhi and other holy tanks located at Puri. Then they have 'darshan' of the principal deities i.e. Lord Shree Jagannath, Shri Balabhadra, Shri Subhadra, Shri Sudarshan and other subsidiary shrines in the premises of Shree Jagannath Temple as well as outside the temple.

The pilgrims usually take 'Poori' 'Ambalu' and pure vegetable curry during the day and Anna Mahaprasad as the main meal in the evening. The Pandas make all arrangement and also take personal interest for their pleasant stay at Shrikshetra Puri,

It may be noted here that all the Pandas or Tirthagurus of holy city Puri speak fluently in different languages such as Hindi, Telgu, Tamil, Gujarati, Marathas, Manipuri, Assamese, Bengali, Bhojpuri and Nepalese and are therefore, able to communicate with the different pilgrims in their native languages.

Generally, the pilgrims offer a 'Annadan Atika Bhog' amount as well as the secret donation

to the Panda and in return they receive the 'Nirmalya' and 'Sukhuli Bhog' of Lord Shree Jagannath Mahaprabhu. Even if a pilgrim falls short of sufficient funds during his stay, the Pandas bear the entire cost of his return journey. If a pilgrim fails to make the secret donation, the Panda or his 'Gumasta' (employee) would visit the home place to collect the promised amount. One of the most important duties of these Pandas or Tirthagurus are to visit the various parts of India referred to their own province or 'Ilaka,' preaching the philosophy and doctrines of 'Lord Jagannath Tattwa' among Hindus, gather the pilgrims and escort them to Puri. This practice is observed since very old time when there was no such communication to Puri.

Most of the prominent Pandas or Tirthagurus employ some staff who take care of the pilgrims. Apart from making 'Darshan' to the deities, the pilgrims purchase the photographs of Lord Shree Jagannath, utensils and other souvenir articles of Shri Jagannath.

It is interesting to note that the Manipur pilgrims only use the service of their Panda, who is regarded as the 'Purhita' of the entire state of Manipur.

Earlier the detailed address of the pilgrims were recorded on palm-leaf manuscripts. But for the last one hundred years, a complete record of all pilgrims together with their thumb impression or signatures is being kept in a register. They also maintain the registers like a mini archive for the benefit of the pilgrims and for research purpose also. For this, the relationship between Tirthagurus and pilgrims is an enriching tradition which has all along been honoured by all the devotees coming to have a Darshan of Shri Lord Jagannath.

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Foreign Accounts on the Car Festival of Puri

Dr. Jayanti Mohanty

Jagannath, the Lord of the universe is the adorable and most venerated God for mankind. All the main deities of Hinduism have been merged in Him. The prominence and the popularity of the Lord is noticed both by the foreigners and within India. Despite many foreign invasion Jagannath Culture of Unity in Diversity is intact here. Odisha maintained Jagannath culture through its unique cultural distinctiveness. Since time immemorial the Car Festival of Puri in Odisha is a historic and important feature of Indian civilization. It is a popular festival celebrated world over and it annually registered world-wide access to brotherhood and humanity comes closer to the religious divinity. It is observed or celebrated generally during the month of June or July every year. The holy shrine of Puri and Lord Jagannath has not only drawn pilgrims from across the country for centuries, but also foreigners who took considerable interest about the place and the Lord.

Historically the first foreign accounts recorded from the Mughal period. It was the court historian Abul fazl in his account *Ain-i-Akbari* vividly elaborated Jagannath temple and the Car Festival in the following sentence as thus “in the town of Purusottama on the bank of the river stands the temple of Jagannath where the three images of Lord Krishna, His brother and sister



are installed, they are washed six times every day and freshly clothed; fifty or sixty Brahmin priests are used to be on their feet in their service and each time they are washed and made to new garments. They are made an offering of large dishes of food, the leavings of which are taken by twenty thousand peoples. The Brahmins at certain times carry the image in procession upon a carriage of sixteen wheel which in the Hindu language is called Rath and they believe that whoever assist in drawing it along obtains remission of all his sins”⁽¹⁾.

Another important foreign account was of Mahamud-bin-Amirwali of Balkh, Afghanistan, he described the trustworthy accounts of Jagannath temple of Puri, he was at Puri on twenty sixth of May 1626 CE, he started his journey to



Puri with a group of devotees numbering about five thousand which he mentioned as the first Kesava of all Kesavas of Orissa. It took them about one month to reach Puri, the devotees used to recite *Haribol* all the way mingled with one another. They took light food in the course of their pilgrimage to Jagannath and never opened the door for any fun with one another. He reached Puri with the group of pilgrims on the first day of *Ramajan or Ramadhan* (one of the month of Muslim *Hijra* era) which fell on the twenty May 1626 CE, when he reached there he was thrilled to see the surrounding with a large number of pilgrims. He stated further that “the plain I saw so long, broad and crowd on it was to such an extent that the imagination was too weak to calculate and the correct estimate he recorded in immediate verse:

- (1) There is a temple like sanctuary of heart.
All the idols there in are the expectorant of heart.
- (2) Roses and tulips rub their foreheads
threshold in such a way that they compelled spectator to prostrate.

It appears that the sanctity and religious atmosphere of the place made him overwhelmed with joy. He also described the various ceremonies and rituals related to the car festival of the Lord Jagannath. The Hindus have free access into the temple. Although we cannot say certainly as to whether the Muslims had their free access into the shrine during the Mughal period, it is evident from *Haft-iqllim* by Amin Ahmad Razi that “in the medieval period there was no objection to Muslims to entering into the temple of Jagannath.”⁽²⁾

In the another verse Mahamud-bin-Amirwali described that “the car consisted of ten wheels, circumference of each being of twenty zera the length and the height from the ground to the top would be more than eighty arrah. The idol

known as Jagannath was installed at the top pedestal and the tower of the chariot was decorated with coloured silk clothes. Nearly five hundred devotees including those of Brahmins, Rajas and Zamindars from different parts of the country offered their services for making the procession ready, about hundred *Kalavants* 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. The very important fact of the above description is that the author stated only one Chariot and one Idol. He also described the painful instances of self-immolation of the Hindus by throwing themselves under the chariots of the Lord. In fact he criticized the occurrence of self-immolation.⁽³⁾

The earliest English visitor William Bruton, who came to Odisha in 1633 CE called it the great city of ‘Jaggarnat’ being called after their great Jagannath. In the early years of the British rule in the Government records Puri has been described as the city of Jagannath and the district was also give the same name. His description about the Lord, His ritual practices are the earliest available accounts on the theme.⁽⁴⁾

Alexander Hamilton who visited Puri in 1708 CE has depicted the second hand finding on the car festivals on the following lines as thus “Jagarynat’s effigy is carried abroad in procession, mounted on coach four storied high and people fell flat on the ground to have the honour to be crushed to pieces by each wheel.”⁽⁵⁾

Another British visitor Harcourt visited Puri in 1805 CE and observed that the car festival in the following lines “the car festival was attended by at least five lakh of the people.” He further observed that “I was astonished at the order and regularity preserved. There was not the least tumult or disposition to violent.”⁽⁶⁾



James Fergusson experienced the car festival of Puri in the year 1837 CE, he described his personal opinion in his work *Picturesque illustrations of Ancient Architecture in Hindustan* in the following sentences “the most agreeably disappointed to find the pilgrim hurrying to the spot talking and laughing, like people going to a fair in England, which in fact, it is he saw no victims crushed under the wheels of the chariots.”⁷⁾

Finally it can be summarized that the British and the Christian missionaries have argued that the car festival of the Jagannath is nothing but a “Hellish triumph” which sense there sadistic approach, but this argue was categorically rejected by their own sensible people like Andrew Stirling, the collector of Puri in 1818 CE in the following words “that such so-called excess of fanaticism reflected in and through instances of immolation were too few and that invariably were the results of accident and enthusiasm.”⁸⁾

Thus the car festival of Lord Jagannath is the symbol of universal brotherhood which bind the peoples of the globe into a single thread free

from narrow differences for which even the foreign travelers not lagged behind to narrate their first hand information in their own words.

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New Light on the Date of the Construction of the Temple of Purusottama-Jagannatha of Puri

Kailash Chandra Dash

Gangesvara-Chodaganga left a lasting contribution to the religious life of Odisha by the construction of the stupendous structure for Sri Purusottama on the sea-shore of Utkala. This achievement has been recorded in the Copper Plate Grant of A.D. 1198-99 and it has been repeated in all the other grants of the later kings of the imperial Ganga dynasty in Odisha¹. This verse has not been recorded in the recently discovered copper plate grant of Kamarnava which was found from Chaudwar².

The verses of the record under discussion state that only Gangesvara could construct a suitable palace for a god like Purusottama whose feet are the earth, the naval the mid region, the head the heaven, the ears the direction and the two eyes the Sun and Moon respectively³. The previous kings neglected the job since they hesitated thinking who can build such a palace for such a god (Who is identical with the Universe)⁴. This verse has been expressed in *lit lakara* (indirect Past tense). The next verse of the same Copper Plate Grant expressed in *langlakara* (direct past tense) states the joy of Purusottama and His consort Laksmi at the construction of the temple⁵. It states that till before the construction of this residence for Visnu-Purusottama, He lived in the milk ocean. But since it is the birth-place of Laksmi, Purusottama felt

rather ashamed of living there, since He knew too well that a respectable person is not accorded honour if he lives as a son-in-law in his father-in-law's house⁶. He was, therefore, very much pleased to get a new palace of residence for Himself and also His wife Laksmi found residing in the house of Her husband much preferable to living in Her father's house⁷.

It needs an explanation why the two verses on the temple of Jagannatha which were found from the records of the later Ganga kings from the period of Rajaraja III were expressed in two different tense forms, the first verse in indirect past and the second in direct past. This aspect has not been explained by any historian so far. On the other hand after a study of the existing views on the verses H.v.Stietencron came to the conclusion in 1977 that the verses only credit Chodaganga as the builder of the temple of Sri Purusottama and that there was no temple for the deity in the pre-Ganga period⁸. But in the focus published in 1978 he changed this interpretation and stated that the later Ganga inscriptions from the Dasgoba Copper Plate Grant of Rajaraja III onwards are wrong when they claim all the merit for Chodaganga by stating that only Gangesvara built the temple of Sri Purusottama while other kings before him neglected this task⁹. Stietencron also suggested



that Chodaganga certainly started building the temple for Purusottama, but he probably did not live to see its completion¹⁰. This view was based on an interpretation of the verses of the Grant of A.D. 1198 and also on an appreciation of the Indradyumna legend which was found in the Puranic sections¹¹.

There were reasons for explaining the event in two tense forms(indirect and direct Past). In the first verse the composer stated that the kings in the pre-Chodaganga period neglected the task of building the temple for Purusottama for his universal significance in that site where Chodaganga built it for the same deity. This verse was explained in indirect past tense form because he had no direct knowledge about the site where Chodaganga built the temple for Purusottama; he might have scant information on the condition of the exact site where Chodaganga built the temple. But he had direct knowledge on the temple building project of Chodaganga in that site which has been explained in direct past tense form in the next verse, because he stated that Purusottama was happy to get his residence built by Chodaganga. The first verse was described in indirect past tense form because the composer had to describe the status of the site in the pre-Chodaganga phase which was not known to him from any other source, but he had to connect this point with Chodaganga's successful plan to build a temple for the deity at that site. The second verse described in direct past tense form definitely indicates that the composer had direct knowledge on the temple of Purusottama in that site which was built by Chodaganga. From an interpretation of the verses it is also clear that there was a temple for Purusottama on the sea shore of Utkala in the pre-Chodaganga period in a different site. Several literary and epigraphic sources confirm that in the pre-Chodaganga period there was the worship of Purusottama on the sea-shore of Utkala.¹²

Thus before the reign of Chodaganga there was no temple for Purusottama at the site where the present structure of Purusottama stands. This invites a point of enquiry why this site was not available for the worship of Visnu-Purusottama in the pre-Chodaganga phase. This is connected with the problem of the occupation and control of the site by Chodaganga before he started building a structure for Visnu-Purusottama. In all probability the site was under the control of the Sakta Tantric sects. Considering the central location of Vimala in the sacred complex of Puri and her significance in the Purusottama Kshetra till the present day and even the worship of Bhairava and Vimala in Odradesa as described in Tantric texts of 11th century A.D. we can confirm that the site was under the control of Tantric deities-possibly Vimala and Bhairava before it became the seat for Purusottama-Jagannatha¹³. The site was surrounded by other Sakta centres and even by Saiva centres. The traditional accounts on Chodaganga as recorded in Madalapanji confirm that he was able to control Tantric practices in Odisha and that he was Vetalasadhya(adept in Tantric practices)¹⁴. He was successful in controlling all Gosanis except Viraja, Ramachandi, Kalika and Vimala¹⁵. This suggests that Chodaganga followed some tricks to counteract the design of the Tantric priests in Puri and occupied the site for the construction of a stupendous structure for Visnu-Purusottama. The Grant of Dasgoba of A.D. 1198 confirms that the site was not utilised by the kings of pre-Chodaganga period for the construction of a suitable palace for Visnu-Purusottama and that Chodaganga did it. This indirectly also suggests that this Ganga king occupied the site first from some sectarian religious groups not related to the Vaisnava sect. That the centre of Purusottama was once under the control of the Tantric/Buddhist priests who were driven out in the Ganga period



was also stated in Madalapanji¹⁶. Ramanuja's failure to reform the centre of Purusottama was in all probability due to the dominance of it by the Tantric/Buddhist priests. Chodaganga got his official religious epithet Parama Vaisnava in A.D. 1108 and by that date he had completed the first round of the conquest of Utkala¹⁷. So he was aware of this situation in Puri before A.D.1108 and by A.D. 1113 (Saka year 1035)he had most likely occupied the site under the sectarian groups for the construction of a gigantic structure for Visnu Purusottama¹⁸. He must have also repaired the old dilapidated temple of Visnu-Purusottama which existed somewhere on the sea-shore zone¹⁹. On the basis of the votive inscriptions in the present Narasimha shrine inside the temple of Jagannatha we can be definite that before and during the construction of the huge structure for Visnu-Purusottama he made arrangement for the regular worship of the deity in the old temple²⁰.

The records of the later Ganga family do not state the exact time when Chodaganga started the construction of this structure and when he completed it. H.v.Stietencron, on the basis of the version of a Puranic text like *Utkala Khanda* of *Skanda Purana* stated that Gangesvara certainly started building the temple, but he probably did not live to see its completion²¹. His view point was:

“The Utkala Khanda of the Skanda Purana mentions the *garbha-pratistha* of the temple. This term has been wrongly taken to denote the consecration of the temple. But this is not so. It refers to a stage in the building of the main temple tower when the foundations have been built and the level of the *garbha-graha* is reached. Now the interior space of the *garbha-graha* which also determines the width of the uppermost portions of the temple tower is precisely measured. The first layer of stones for its walls are joined with utmost care. And the rite

of *garbha-pratistha* is performed. It is only after the completion of this rite that work starts on the raising of the temple walls. The Utkala Khanda tells us that this work was not yet completed when the king ascended to heaven,i.e., died. It describes how the king while in heaven is worried about the proper continuation of the building activities.”

This interpretation of the versions of Utkala Khanda by the learned historian is very interesting, but such a literary text is not a reliable source for an authentic study on the work of the construction of the temple by the royal authority. The composer of Utkala Khanda might have combined the building activities in the Kshetra of Sri Purusottama in the pre-Ganga period with that of the period of the Ganga kings. The composer could not give any break between the building activities in the pre-Ganga period in the Kshetra of Purusottama and that of the time of Chodaganga. Stietencron came to this conclusion because he accepted Chodaganga as the first Indradyumna. As we have stated earlier there was also a temple for Sri Purusottama somewhere in the Kshetra though not in the site occupied by Chodaganga for the construction of the new temple. The composer of the text might have accepted the builder of the first temple of Purusottama in the pre-Ganga phase as the first Indradyumna. Thus Chodaganga's construction of the Vimana and Jagamohana of the temple of Sri Purusottama and the construction of a small temple for the deity by a king of the pre-Ganga phase were combined in the Utkala Khanda as a result of which the real fact about the builder of the temple was not disclosed.

This learned historian also stated that the great temple was mentioned for the first time in the Dasgoba Copper Plate Grant of Rajaraja III, son of Anangabhima II which strengthened the view that Anangabhima II probably completed and consecrated the main temple tower begun



by Chodaganga²². This view has also contrary arguments which may be presented in the following points;

1. The Copper Plate Grant of A.D. 1198 confirms that the construction of the huge temple for Sri Purusottama was completed by Gangesvara Chodaganga and both Laksmi and Purusottama were consecrated in the new temple during the reign of Chodaganga. The composer of the Grant had to review the events of atleast fifty years and if at all it was the achievement of any of the four sons of Chodaganga, it would not have been recorded in the column of Chodaganga's deeds. Thus there is unmistakable reference about the completion of the construction of the temple and the consecration of the deity during the glorious phase of the reign of Chodaganga in the Copper Plate Grant of Rajaraja III which has been repeated in all the other Grants of the later Ganga kings starting from Anangabhima III.

2. Certain architectural features of the Jagannatha temple also warrant the fact that Chodaganga started and completed the huge temple of Purusottama. The architectural similarity of the *bada* of the Lingaraja, Brahmesvara and Jagannatha, the representation of *anga-sikhara* in the flat portion of the first *bhumi* of the Kanikapaga in Jagannatha and Brahmesvara indicate that the date of the completion of the vimana of the temple cannot be fixed far beyond the the first quarter of the 12th century A.D. In the post-Chodaganga period, a Sapta-Rathi structure in Bhubaneswar like Meghesvara was constructed. Thus, if Anangabhima II constructed the upper portion of the temple of Jagannatha, he could have followed the system in Meghesvara. But in reality, a difference is noticed in the treatment of the *gandi* of the Meghesvara and Jagannatha temple which indicates that the *gandi* of the Jagannatha temple was completed much

before the construction of the full-fledged Sapta-Rathi *gandi* of Meghesvara. These features justify that Chodaganga constructed the huge structure for Visnu Purusottama during his period.²³

The period when Chodaganga started building the temple and when the same was completed by him are the two problems in this context. Some historians think that Chodaganga started the construction of the temple after A.D. 1135 when he completed all his campaigns²⁴. Indeed from A.D. 1126 to A.D. 1135 Chodaganga was busy in conquering the kingdoms in South-Eastern India and so the construction of the temple had begun before A.D. 1126 or after A.D. 1135. But epigraphic records justify that he was in Vihara Pataka for holybath in Jahnava and so the construction of the temple was to begin after his return from that place²⁵. But this view cannot be accepted because he could not be able to complete the huge structure within four years. The Copper Plate record of A.D. 1198 states that he completed the structure during his period. Moreover, how could Chodaganga proceed to Vihara Pataka for holybath giving up the task of the temple construction? Therefore it is logical to suggest that he had completed the huge structure before A.D. 1126.

In all probability it was after the first round of Utkala conquest before A.D. 1108 and after A.D. 1096 Chodaganga came to know about the cult of Sri Purusottama and the neglected shrine of the same on the seashore of Utkala. But he took the momentous step of constructing a huge structure for Sri Purusottama only after his final round of conquest of Utkala. He had probably stayed in *Sindurapura* from his 39th regnal year for the constructional works. This Sindurapura was probably the area around the old temple of Sri Purusottama which is described as *Sundara Parvata* in the *Musali Parva* of *Sarala Mahabharata*²⁶. The present site of Gundicha



Mandira, Nilakantha temple and the surrounding area around the *Surdarajega* could probably have been called Sindurapura during the early phase of Ganga rule in Odisha²⁷. The king reported in his Copper Plate Grants that before A.D. 1117 (by his 39th regnal year) he was staying with the people of Sindurapura and that by that date he had become the sovereign lord of Utkala²⁸. Thus Chodaganga with this local support of the areas around Puri and Prachi zone started the construction of the temple for Purusottama. During the phase of the construction of the huge temple for Sri Purusottama he had arranged for the worship of the deity in the old temple of Purusottama by granting an endowment for the *anga-bhoga* of the same in the 37th regnal year²⁹. For this *anga-bhoga* (body decoration and other rituals) some amount of gold coins were deposited with Sadhu Bhima Deva, Rudra and Hari of Niralo Grama³⁰. His inscriptions in the pillars of the Narasimha shrine inside the temple of Narasimha also confirm for the first time his efforts for the worship of Sri Purusottama from Saka year 1035³¹. His Copper Plate Grants from A.D. 1139-1140 clearly indicate his complete control over the Utkala kingdom (*Sakala-Utkala-Samrajya Padavi Virajamane, Sakala-Utkala Rajya Sukhanubhavadhi*) as well as the decoration of the official religious epithet *Parama-Vaisnava* omitting his parental religious epithet *Parama Mahesvara* which must have some connection with the construction of a stupendous structure for Visnu-Purusottama on the sea-shore of Utkala³².

The work of the construction was so rapid that within ten to twelve years Chodaganga was able to erect a gargantuan structure for Visnu-Purusottama. The king devoted whole-heartedly to the work of construction instead of engaging himself in the military campaigns. Therefore the composer of the Grant of A.D. 1198 describes

this achievement after stating the conquest of Somavamsi Utkala by him³³. The conquest of Utkala and the completion of the construction of the huge temple for Visnu-Purusottama were thus the two inter-connected events of the period from A.D. 1113-14 to A.D. 1124-25. The inscriptions of Chodaganga and his successors recording provisions for the worship of Sri Purusottama are found in the present Narasimha shrine inside the present temple of Purusottama³⁴. This Narasimha temple must have not existed there during the construction of the huge temple for Purusottama and also the inscriptions placed in the pillars of the temple as well as in the side wall clearly indicate that this temple was reconstructed near the present site of Purusottama after the construction of the temple for Purusottama and the regular worship of the deity there³⁵. In all probability this was part of the old temple for Sri Purusottama of the pre-Ganga phase and as it contained the old inscriptions of Chodaganga and his successors for the worship of the deity and so demanded a reconstruction at the site of the huge temple for Purusottama as evidence of their grants for the worship of Purusottama during and after the construction of the huge temple for Purusottama. We find no inscription of Chodaganga and his successors in the walls of the present huge temple of Purusottama and also the inscriptions of Anangabhima III for the worship of Jagannatha Trinity were only found in the Patalesvara temple which justify that the kings did not want to disfigure the walls and gates of the newly constructed shrine for Purusottama-Jagannatha. Only inscriptions of Suryavamsi kings were found in the Purusottama-Jagannatha temple because by their time the structure was old. The presence of the inscriptions of Chodaganga on the wall of the Lingaraja temple definitely indicate that the same was in existence when Chodaganga came to record his grants there. The absence of any inscription of



Chodaganga on the wall and gate of the present temple for Purusottama-Jagannatha definitely indicate that there was no temple for Purusottama at this site when Chodaganga came to worship the deity. This indicates that Chodaganga was its builder as is described in Dasgoba Grant of Rajaraja III³⁶.

References :

1. Dasgoba Copper Plate Grant of Rajaraja III, *EI*, Vol.XXXI, p.255.M.M.Chakravarti, 'The Date of the Jagannatha Temple in Puri', *JASB*, Vol.LXVII, 4(1898),p.318-31. K.N.Mahapatra, 'Antiquity of Jagannatha Puri as a Place of Pilgrimage', *OHRJ*, Vol.III, No.I, 1954, p.13.
2. Rabi Ray, 'Saptama Kamarnava (Jatesvaradeva)ka Chaudvara Tamrasasana', *Jhankara*, November, 1994, 46/8, p.903-915.
3. Dasgoba Copper Plate Grant of Rajaraja III, Verse-29; *Padau tasyadharantariksamnabhischassarvadisa h / Srotrenetrayugam Ravinduyugalammurdhapichadyaurasau/ Prasadam Purusottamasya nrpatihkonamakarttumksa-mastasyetiyadyanrapairupeksitamayamchakretha Gangesvarah//*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Laksmi janmagrham Payonidhi rasausambhavitasyasthirno dhamnisvasurasyapuj-yataitiksiravdhivasaddhruvam/ Nirvinnah Purusottamah pramuditastat Dhamalabhad Ramapyetadbhartgrhamvarampitrgrhatprapyapramodanvita//*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. H.v.Stietencron, 'The Date of the Jagannatha Temple, Literary Sources Reconsidered', in *Sidelights on History and Culture of Orissa*, 1977, Cuttack, p.518-519.
9. H.v.Stietencron, 'Advent of Visnuism in Orissa: An Outline of Its History According to Archaeological and Epigraphical Sources from the Gupta Period', *The Cult of Jagannatha and the Regional Tradition of Orissa (hereafter cited as CJRTO)*, ed. Eschmann, Kulke and Tripathy, 1978, Manohar, Delhi, p.17.
10. H.v.Stietencron, 'Early Temples of Jagannatha in Orissa', *CJRTO*, p.76.
11. *Ibid.* Utkala Khanda, Skanda Purana, Chapter-XVI.
12. H.K.Mahatab, *History of Orissa*, Vol.I., p.205; K.N.Mahapatra, *op.cit.*, *OHRJ*, Vol.III, No.I, p.6-21;D.C.Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Medieval India*, p.75-78; K.C.Mishra, *The Cult of Jagannatha*, p.34 ff; K.S.Behera, 'Antiquity of the Deity Purusottama-Jagannatha at Puri', *Bharati*, 1973, p.19-29; H.v. Stietencron, *op.cit.*, *CJRTO*, p.16-21;G.C.Tripathy, 'On the Concept of Purusottama in the Agamas', *CJRTO*, p.36-41.
13. For the worship of Bhairava and Vimala see H.v.Stietencron, 'Advent of Visnuism in Orissa', *CJRTO*, p.26-27.
14. *Madalapanji*, 1969, p.21-23; Kailash Chandra Dash, *Legend, History and Culture of India*, 1997, Calcutta, p.17-19.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Madalapanji*, 1969, p.25-26, p.54.
17. The Mukhalingam Grant of A.D. 1108 was the earliest Grant of Chodaganga to refer to the religious epithet *Parama Vaisnava after Parama Mahesvara*. EA, Vol.IV, p.47.
18. Chodaganga's presence in Purusottama Kshetra can be known from his inscriptions at Narasimha shrine inside the present temple of Jagannatha where his grants were recorded in Saka year 1035. See for the inscriptions S.N.Rajaguru, *Inscriptions of the Temples of Puri and Origin of Sri Purusottama Jagannatha*, Vol.I, 1992, Puri, p.13-16.
19. There was worship of Purusottama on the seashore of Utkala in the pre-Ganga period which can be confirmed from the epigraphic and literary records. See No.12. Dasgoba Grant of A.D. 1198 also confirms that Purusottama was staying in his father-in-law's house (ocean) which was the birthplace of Laksmi. The statement of the absence of a palace for Sri Purusottama in the pre-Chodaganga period in Puri in this grant can also be taken as an evidence for the existence of a small shrine somewhere on the seashore for Sri Purusottama. See Dasgoba Grant *EI*, Vol.XXXI, p.255.
20. S.N.Rajaguru, *op.cit.*, p.12-54. S.Tripathy, *Descriptive Topographical Catalogue of Orissan Inscriptions*, 2010, p.399-412.
21. H.v. Stietencron, 'Early Temples of Jagannatha in Orissa', *CJRTO*, p.76.
22. H.v.Stietencron, p.77.
23. For the architectural features of Meghesvara temple see K.C.Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar*, 1961/1981, p.63-64. An undated



- inscription of Draksarama temple of the period of Velananti Gonka II states that he vanquished the lord of Kalinga and kept golden vessels on the Purusottama temple. This inscription was of the period of A.D. 1143-1150. The reference to *Sri Purusottamasya Nilaya* in this inscription indicates that the temple of Purusottama was completed by Chodaganga in his period. See *SII*, Vol.IV, No.1164.
24. D.C.Sircar stated:"we do not know whether the Purusottama Jagannatha temple was built by Chodaganga before or after the 37thregnal year of his reign though the absence of any reference to the achievement in any of his records suggests that the construction was undertaken in the later years of his life". D.C.Sircar, *op.cit.*, p.75. H.v.Stietencron, *op.cit.*, p.74. H.K.Mahatab, *op.cit.*, p.204.
 25. For Chodaganga's stay in *Vihara Pataka* on the bank of Jahnavi near Mandaradri see Chinna Badamu Grant of A.D. 1140, *EA*, Vol.II, p.71-72. *SII*, Vol.X, No.690 and 691, Vol.IV, No.1190.
 26. See for this context Kailash Chandra Dash, 'Nilasundaragiri:A Puranic Viewpoint', *Purana*, Vol.XXXVII, No.II, p.164-170.
 27. *Ibid.*, p.167-170.
 28. Kailash Chandra Dash, 'Chodaganga and Vaisnavism', *QJMS*, Vol.LXXXIV, No.IV, p.180-181. His Copper Plate Grants of Saka year 1039 and 1040 state that he shared his happiness of the complete conquest of all Utkala with the people of Sindurapura. At that time he was adorned with the only imperial religious epithet *ParamaVaisnava*.
 29. Markandesvara temple inscription of his 37thregnal year refers to the *anga-bhoga* of Sri Purusottama. See *EI* ,Vol.XXIII, p.184. An inscription of Chodaganga of the Saka year 1035(*Sara-loka-khendu-ganite*) refers to the grant of *Akhanda-vati* to Purusottama. This inscription is on the rightside doorway of the Narasimha shrine. It suggests that Chodaganga took interest in the worship of Sri Purusottama after his Utkala invasion. See S.Tripathy, *op.cit.*, p.399-401.
 30. *EI*, Vol.XXIII, p.184.
 31. For Narasimha temple inscriptions of the period of Chodaganga see S.Tripathy, *op.cit.*, p.399-414.
 32. For the Copper Plate Grants of A.D. 1118 see Kailash Chandra Dash, 'Chodaganga and Vaisnavism', *QJMS*, p.180-188. Palkonda Grant of A.D. 1118 refers to *Sakala Utkala Rajya Sukhanubhavadhi* which might have some connection with the construction of a huge structure for Sri Purusottama. Dasgoba grant of A.D. 1198 refers to the conquest of Utkala first and then the construction of a huge structure for Sri Purusottama. See *EI*,Vol.XXI, p.255.
 33. S.N.Rajaguru, *op.cit.*, p.13-32. S.Tripathy, *op.cit.*, p.399-414.
 34. S.N.Rajaguru, *op.cit.*, p.99-100. The Narasimha shrine which contains the inscriptions of Chodaganga and his successors for the deity Purusottama might have been reconstructed by the stones of an earlier shrine. The temple has no *mukhasala* which indicates that it was lost. The placement of the inscriptions in the front doors clearly indicates its reconstruction.
 35. Recently Rabi Ray of Chaudwar on the basis of a Copper Plate Grant of Kamarnava Deva which does not refer to Chodaganga's construction of the huge structure for Sri Purusottama stated that this temple existed before his reign. He even did not accept the version of Dasgoba Grant on the construction of Sri Purusottama temple by Chodaganga because the verse is in indirect past form. This is a strange view and now we can affirm that though in indirect past form the statement in Dasgoba grant on the construction of the temple of Sri Purusottama cannot be disputed. See for this debate *Jhankara*, August, 1993, p.429-434; March, 1994, p.1019-1026; July, 1995, p.399-409;July, 1996, p.484-490(Focus of Rabi Ray). *Jhankara*, December, 1993, p.785-788; September, 1994, p.529-536; February, 1996, p.1339-1347(Focus of Kailash Chandra Dash). Besides the authentic version of Dasgoba Grant the architectural and sculptural features of the present Jagannatha temple definitely state that it was a structure of the first phase of the 12th century A.D.and the existence of such a stupendous structure in Puri in pre-Chodaganga period as argued by Rabi Ray is next to impossibility.



Purushottama Kshetra : The Sacred Shrine of Hindu World

Dr. Janmejay Choudhury

The concept of *tirtha* or sacred shrine in the Indian context originates from the time when Puranas began to be composed around 4th century A.D. The meaning of *tirtha* is a sacred shrine charged with the power of Gods and Goddesses and resonant with purity. A *tirtha* possesses three elements that make it so sacred –it is Suchipure, it brings Punyagoodness and it is Subha-auspicious. This makes a *tirtha* a place where you can gain *nirvana*, enlightenment and achieve *moksha* or liberation. A *tirtha* is a place on earth where the gods descend and which facilitates the crossing over, enabling ascent

of human beings from Bhavasagar or the temporal and ephemeral world of nama and rupa, (name and form), multiplicity and diversity, to the eternal abode of oneness, peace, tranquility and bliss. Tirtha really stood for knowledge as knowledge

alone helps us get over ignorance and leads to liberation. It has now come to mean a sacred place which helps one to cross over from cycle of birth and death to *moksha* or liberation. Pilgrims aspire to attain salvation by visiting sacred

shrines to prepare for release from the temporal world. Puri is known in the ancient scriptures as Shree Dham. It is recognized as Dham or a *tirtha* particularly after 9th century.

Purusottam-Puri has been described in the various Puranas as the most sacred shrine in Bharata Varsa. It is the Kshetra where the God Purusottama made his sacred shrine perpetual abode, Vaikuntha Bhuban.¹

The sacred shrines, according to the tradition, existed even during the great universal deluge and also in the beginning of this creation.² Its greatness is unparalleled, its importance is unique and its sanctity is unquestionable.³ Puri enjoys its position





as one of the foremost religious centres of India. It is one of the seven Mokshapuris or salvation centres of the Hindu faith. ‘Ayodhya Mathura Mahakasi Kanchi Avantika Puri Dwaravasti caiva saptaita Mokshadayika’ is a Puranic couplet. These seven places virtually cover the whole of India between them. There are four chief religious centres around which the Brahmanical religion and practices flourish. Of these, while Badrinath and Dwaraka are centre of Vaishnavism and Rameswaram is the centre of Saivism, Puri fosters the confluence of all sects in and through Purusottama Jagannath, even though many regard Him as the embodiment of Vaishnavism. To the outside world and in a general sense, “The national reverence of the Hindus for holy places has been, for ages, concentrated at Puri, sacred to Vishnu under His title Jagannath, the Lord of the world.”⁴ In respect of its hold on the Hindu mind, Puri is considered by some as the most sacred shrine in India, even more sacred than Varanasi. Named after Purusottama Jagannath, the city is also known as Niladri, Sri Ksetra, Sankha Ksetra, Jamanika Ksetra and Martya Baikuntha or the heaven on earth.⁵ Purusottama Jagannath is supposed to be above sectarian considerations and distinctions of caste and creed. The ‘Pujaripalli’ inscription of Gopalvir Deva belonging to the 11th century indicate that Purusottama Ksetra was considered as a sacred shrine among ‘Kedar, Prayaga and Puskara’ etc. The book ‘Abhidhana Chintamani’ of Hemachandra (1081-1173), alludes to the popularity of Jagannath. This Ksetra also finds reference in Satananda’s Ratnamalika of the 11th century. The 12th century inscription of Malava Raja of Nagpur includes a reference to Purusottama Ksetra. The Barhaspatya Arthashastra of 11th century refers to Purusottama as one of the eight Vaishnava Tirthas of India.⁶ In the ‘Tirtha Vivechana Khandam’ of the Kritya

Kalpataru, Laksmidhara (early 12th century A.D.) mentions Purusottama as a place of pilgrimage on the authority of Vamana Purana.

Visnudharmattara of 600A.D.refers to the manifestation of Visnu as Purushottama in Odra country (Udresa Purushottama)⁷. The Ksetramahatmyas of Jagannath Puri have been discussed in Brahma Purana (1030A.D)⁸, Narada Purana, Kapila Samhita⁹ (1350A.D), Skanda Purana (11th-12th centuryA.D)¹⁰, Padma Purana, Vamadev Samhita (published by Mukti Mandap Pandit Mahasabha in 1972) and also Niladri Mahodaya (Published by Maharaja of Sonepur in 1970). The Pujaripali inscription¹¹ of Gopal (11th century A.D) mentions Purushottam as an important *tirtha* of India. In the inscription discovered from Govindpur¹² (in Nawdah Subdivision of Gaya District, Bihar) poet Gangadhara states that his father Manoratha visited Purushottam. As the inscription is dated in Saka year 1059 (1137-38A.D), this proves the popularity of Purushottama as a *tirtha* and the close religious contacts between Bihar and Odisha in the twelfth century A.D. The Edilpur grant of Kesava Sena says that Laksmana Sena (1179-1205A.D) established a sacrificial pillar at Purushottama.¹³

The Kapil Samhita refers to the land as the one “that takes away sin”.¹⁴ The Matsya Purana, among the oldest of the Puranas, refers to Purushottama Ksetra twice.¹⁵ The sacred tract is also known as Sankha Ksetra in the Utkal Khanda of Skanda Purana, one conspicuous point of “Purushottama Ksetra Prasasti” of this Purana, as also of Niladri Purana, is that these speak of Jagannath being established on Nrsinga’s mantras.¹⁶ Purushottama in Odra is mentioned in the Saradadevi temple inscription (c.10th century A.D) at Maihar in the Satna district of Madhya Pradesh.¹⁷ The sanctity of this place and of its



presiding deity must have gained wider acceptance after the construction of the temple, as is apparent from the Kapilasa inscription of Narasimha I (1246-53 A.D) which describes Purushottama as Chaturdasa Bhuvanadhipati or the Lord of the fourteen worlds.¹⁸ The Barhaspatya *sutram* (C.6-7 century A.D) speaks of Purushottama Ksetra as a conspicuous centre of Vaishnavism and specifies its distance from Dwaraka.¹⁹ The Nagari plate of Anangabhima Dev III (of Saka era 1152-53 i.e., 1229-30A.D) describes the place of Purushottama Ksetra. "This name (Purushottama Ksetra) in the form of Purushottama Chhatar or only in the form of Chhatar was used by the Mughal, the Maratha as well as the early British rulers in their official records".²⁰ The city is referred to as Purushottama in Kalika Purana and in Yoginitantra.²¹ Puri region was also known as Utkal.²² "The name Purushottama Ksetra was also sometime known as Purushottama Puri and the word Purushottama Ksetra or Chhatra so also Purushottama Puri was expressed in the contracted form"²³ of Purushottama or Puri. Kurma Purana mentions that Purushottama *tirtha* belongs to Narayana although, it is named after Purushottama. The supreme Purusa Narayana resides here with all glory. A pilgrim after taking holy bath in this sacred *tirtha* and worshipping supreme Vishnu (Narayana) and feeding the Brahmanas secures the abode of Vishnu. Puri has the Lord Jagannath Temple, the roaming ocean Mahodadhi and the grand festival, famous Rath Yatra and the presence of Vishnu.

Puri emerges as a *tirtha* having pan-Indian character since early part of 12th century A.D., with the increasing process of ritual royalization of the deity Lord Jagannath. It was during 12th century A.D, that the temple town Puri might have assumed the greatest prominence

under the rule of Imperial Gangas (1078-1435A.D). Sri Jagannath worship was renewed and reached at its climax particularly Vaishnavism with the Bhakti movement of Sri Chaitanya. From first part of 16th century, the pilgrim movement to Puri was grown and it became the epi-centre of Vaishnava culture in the whole of eastern-India. The rituals like Nagar Kirtan brought the medium for popularization of Jagannath culture and rested deep into heart and mind of the common people. Jagannath worship on the principle of Prema Bhakti or devotion by love was only the way to attain *mukti* and became the culture of mass and thus the culture was spread over Odisha, Bengal etc. For millions of devotees, Jagannath is not merely a local deity of Odisha; He is considered as a manifestation of the Supreme Being. He occupies a pivotal position in the religious life of Hindu-world, and it is admitted that His culture, in the present form, has a distant message for the Indian People. In one senses the Jagannath cult can be described as a transcendental secularism for the fact that many individual religious faiths appear to have been transcended and synthesized in it. The Jagannath cult is more than an amalgam of Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism and Vaisnavism, etc. Thus the influences of various sects on Jagannath cult are discernible. "Jagannath cult has welcomed all and embraced all, but been overwhelmed by none and has lost itself in none."²⁴ The cult of Jagannath is an elective system that has "assimilated and incorporated in its fold the influences of divergent religious creeds and sects." But Jagannath is never a sectarian deity. He supersedes sectarian considerations and comprehensions. His image is crude and unanthropomorphic. The mode of worship of the deities is also diverse. The Mahaprasad is above caste barriers. There is seldom sect that dose not deify Jagannath and claim Him to be its own at Puri. It leads one to wonder whether the



simultaneous prevalence of divergent faiths (Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism ,Saivism, Saktism) show a heterogeneous society, too varied to be unitary.

The Jagannath cult is an attempted synthesis during the reign of the Somavamsis in Odisha from 9th to 11th centuries. King Yayati Kesari of this dynasty was the king of a unified and larger Odisha containing Kosal, Utkal as well as tribal areas of Odisha. A religious unity was imperative in such a kingdom “over which the king exercised only a ritual hegemony.” The Chakradhara Vishnu or Madhava of the Savaras, the Siva or Sankarsana of the Nagas, the dharma and Sakti of Buddhism and, above all, the Stamveswari of Kondhs, Nalas and Bhanjas came to be identified with, and symbolized in, Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshana respectively. The cult of Jagannath is an integrated whole. It has absorbed the Narayan Cult of Bhagabat religion, Madhava Cult of Odisha, the Atheist Cult of Buddhism and Gopinath Cult of Vaisnavism in course of time. Jagannath is a total symbol of Hindu’s identity. He is the source of our beliefs, social norms and relationships, cultural excellence and value systems. Devotion to Him means a way of life: no code, no canon, but feeling His presence as Universal Guide without and within and love for one and all. Jagannath stands for the Highest Common Factor of all religions. Though enshrined in His temple, He is lodged as Universal self within the heart of everyone guiding them to right action. He is dispenser of a spiritual order based on faith, universal brotherhood and love. From mid-12th century till 16th century Odisha had witnessed a continuous flow of Vaisnavism which identified

itself with the Jagannath cult and spawned forth the cult of Jagannath on a concrete basis.

References :

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2. Ibid 1/37.
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Patita Pavana Temple at Ottarasasana : A Study on Art and Architecture

Dr. Ratnakar Mohapatra

Introduction

The temple of Patita Pavana is one of the Vaishnavite shrines of the Prachi Valley in Odisha. It is located at the village Ottarasasana in the Gop Block of the Puri district.¹ This temple is situated about 5 km from Nuahat and 6 km from the Prachi river. The temple consists of three structures such as *vimana*, *jagamohana* and *natamandapa*. The local people say that the temple was built by the local zamindar within 200 years before the present. The present temple is built in laterite blocks, sand stones and bricks. It faces to east. The temple has been renovated in 1910's and also in 2001 A.D. So it is completely a renovated temple. The temple is exactly located at the centre of the village. The temple was possibly constructed in the 19th century A.D. and it is completely a new temple for the scholarly work. The earlier scholars have not dealt with this temple. Hence a modest attempt has been made in this article to highlight the detailed art and architecture of the temple of Patita Pavana.

Art and Architecture of the Temple

A. Vimana

The *vimana* of the temple is a *pidha deula* and its height is about 28 feet from the surface of the temple complex. It has four vertical parts such as *pista*, *bada*, *gandi* and *mastaka*.



The *pista* is plain and it measures 3 feet 1 inch in height. The centre of the upper part of the *pista* on the northern side is fixed with a *makara* headed gargoyle for the ventilation of the washing water of the presiding deity. The base of the *bada* measures a square of 16 feet 8 inches. The *bada* of the *vimana* is *panchanga* type i.e. having five component parts viz; *pabhaga*, *talajangha*, *bandhana*, upper *jangha* and *baranda*. The *pabhaga* is devoid of decorative elements. The niches of the *tala jangha* are housed with the dancing female figures holding musical instruments, female figures in different postures, three headed Brahma figures, etc. The *bandhana*



of the *bada* is completely plain. The niches of the upper *jangha* are inserted with *simha vidalas* and *nara vidalas*. The *baranda* of the *bada* is bereft of decorative elements.

The central niches of the three sides of the *bada* are housed with the *parsvadevata* images of Narasimha, Vamana and Varaha. All the side deities are housed in the *pidha mundi* niche. Narasimha is the *parsvadevata* of the northern side. The four armed image of Narasimha is carved in standing posture on the double petalled lotus pedestal. All the four hands of deity are completely broken from the arm portions. Here the deity is ferocious form and it is depicted in the posture of tearing the heart of Hiranya Kashyapa. Sridevi and Bhudevi figures are flanked on either side of the deity. The backside of the head of the deity is decorated with *makara* headed arch crowned by the *kirtimukha* motif. Flying *apsara* figure is depicted on both side top corners of the slab. The image Narasimha is made of granite stone. It measures 1 foot 2½ inches in width and 2 feet 4 inches in height respectively. Vamana is the *parsvadevata* of the western side. The two armed image of Vamana is inserted in the central niche of the *bada* of the western side. It is made of sand stone. The left hand of deity holds an umbrella while the right hand possesses a begging pot. He wears a sacred thread in his body. Here the Vamana image has three legs. The right leg sets up on the ground, the left leg puts on the head of King Bali and another left leg uplifts towards heaven. The sculpture depicts the *Balidana* scene of Lord Vamana. The figure

Vamana is thickly plastered with the modern cement. It is completely the work of the modern period. Varaha is the *parsvadevata* of the southern side (Pl.No.89). The four armed image of Varaha is carved in standing posture on the double petalled lotus pedestal. He holds *chakra* in upper right hand, *sankha* in lower left hand, the lower right hand holds the hand of a female figure possibly Bhudevi(Prithvi) and the left upraised arm bears the image of goddess Prithvi.

Bhudevi is carved on the left side of the deity. There is a *naga* figure depicted at the centre of the pedestal. The deity Varaha wears a garland of beads in his body. The backside of the head of deity is decorated with trefoil arch; *makara* head at the base and the *kirtimukha* motif at the apex. *Apsara* figures holding garlands are carved on both side top corners of the slab. The image Varaha is made of granite stone. It measures 1 foot 2½ inches in width and 2 feet 2 inches in height respectively.



The *gandi* of the *vimana* is a pyramidal superstructure and it consists of five flat shaped *pidhas*. Each *pidha* is decorated with *tankus* in all sides. Two *jhapasimhas* are projected on the eastern side of the *gandi* in successive order. *Deula Carini* figures are usually inserted on the top of *kanika pagas* of the south-east and north-east corners. *Dopichha* lions are not found in their respective places above the *gandi*.

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



The entire *gandi* is repaired by the cooperation of villagers after the Super cyclone of Orissa in 1999.

The sanctum preserves the *Daru* image of Lord Patita Pavana as the presiding deity of the temple. The floor of the sanctum is about 3 feet high from the road level. The *Daru* image of Patita Pavana is about 3 feet in height. The images of Radha-Krishna and Lakshmi made of *astadhatu* are also found worshipped on the *simhasana*, which is about 2 feet high. Inner walls of the sanctum are depicted with the paintings of *gopies*, scroll work and other deities.

The sanctum has one doorway towards the *jagamohana*. The centre of the doorway lintel is carved with Gaja-Lakshmi image in *abhiseka* pose. *Navagraha* figures are carved on the architrave above the doorway lintel. *Gana* figures are flanked on the *navagraha* slab. All the *grahas* are depicted in *yogasana* posture with usual attributes in their hands. The base of the doorframe is decorated with *pidha mundi* on both sides. Figures of Nandi and Bhringi are carved in either side *pidha mundi* niche of the door frame. They are being considered as the *dvarapalas* of the temple.

Jagamohana and Natamandapa

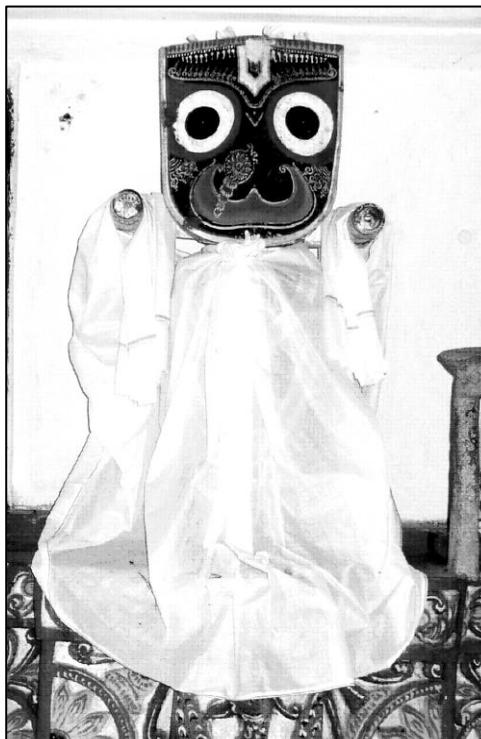
The *jagamohana* and *natamandapa* of the temple are built in the single structure separated by a plain wall. These two structures are recently built in 2006 A.D. The height of these two

structures is about 13 feet from the road level. The construction work of the *jagamohana* and *natamandapa* was also under progress at the time of survey of the temple. The *jagamohana* has three doorways and all are completely plain. Outer as well as inner walls of the *jagamohana* are bereft of decorative elements. The western side of the inner right wall of the *natamandapa*

is inserted with the *navagraha* slab. All the *grahas* are carved in *yogasana* posture with usual attributes in their hands. Each *graha* is carved in the *pidha mundi* niche. Recently, the sculptural panel of *Anantasayee* Vishnu is relieved on the eastern side roof of the *natamandapa*.

Garuda, the conventional mount of Lord Vishnu is installed on the square sized pedestal of 2 feet high. It is noticed at the centre of the *natamandapa*. The image Garuda is made of sand stone. The two armed image of Garuda is carved in kneeling posture on the double petalled lotus pedestal. Both the hands of Garuda are depicted in *anjali mudra*. The backside of the head of Garuda is decorated with *prabhmandala*. Flower medallion is carved on both side top corners of the slab. The Garuda figure measures 1 foot 1½ inches in width and 1 foot 9 inches in height respectively.

The *natamandapa* has openings to all sides. Two huge lions are installed on both sides of the eastern doorway. They are watching the main doorway of the *natamandapa*.





Additional Shrines

Besides the main temple, there are three additional shrines noticed at the temple complex. They are being mentioned as follows:

A. Shrine of Svapnesvara

There is a separate shrine of *pidha* order, which is dedicated to Lord Svapnesvara Siva noticed on the southern side of the *vimana*. The shrine is about 15 feet high from the surface of the temple complex. The central niches of the *bada* of the additional shrine are housed with the *parsvadevata* images of Ganesha, Kartikeya and Parvati. All the side deities possess as usual attributes in their hands. The *gandi* and *mastaka* of the shrine have usual component parts of the Orissan *pidha deula*. The sanctum of the shrine preserves the *Sivalinga* within the *Saktipitha* as the presiding deity. Bull, the conventional mount of Lord Siva is found installed in front of the additional shrine.

B. Shrine of Banamali

There is an additional shrine of *rekha* order noticed in front of the *natamandapa*. It is about 12 feet high from the surface of the temple complex. The shrine preserves two stone images of Banamali as the *Gramadevati* or “*Adhisthatri Devi*” of that village. An elongated stone slab containing an image of female deity carved in standing posture. She holds a staff (*danda*) in her two hands. The image is about 2 feet in height. Another stone slab containing a female deity, who is carved in *ardhaparyanka* pose. Both of her hands rest on the pedestal. The backside of the

head of *devi* is decorated with *prabhmandala*. Both the images of the shrine are made of sand stone.

C. Shrine of Trinatha

There is another small shrine of conical roof erected in front of the shrine of Gramadevati (Banamali). The shrine preserves the diminutive images of Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesvara and an image of Ganesha for public worship. The shrine has been built in 1980's by the villagers.

There is a *ajhulana mandapa* built in front of the *natamandapa*. A *makara* headed *torana* is built on the *mandapa*. A *snanavedi* is erected on the northern side of the *natamandapa*.

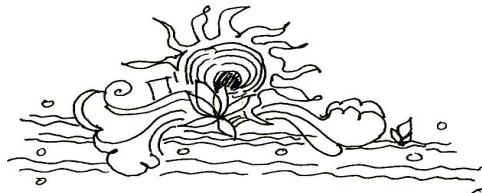
Date of the Temple

The local people say that the temple was built by the Zamindar of Bhodara. On the basis of the architectural pattern and iconographic features of the side deities, the construction period of the Patita Pavana temple can be tentatively assigned to the 19th century A.D. Now, the temple is being managed by a local committee of that village. Now, the temple is being managed by the village committee of Ottarasasana.

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1. Santosh Kumar Mitra, one of the scholars of the Prachi Gaveshana Parisada who initially diverted my attention towards this temple.

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Daily Rituals of Baladevjew Temple of Kendrapara : An Overview

Balaram Lenka

Throughout the history of human culture, certain days and periods of time have been observed for ritual celebration. There are many rituals observed in the Baladevjew temple from morning to night. The daily rituals in the temple of Baladevjew are generally observed almost on the same way as practised in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. The deities are being worshipped here in '*Sodasa Upachara*' with Rudra, Durga and Vishnu *mantras* and *strotas*. The information regarding the daily rituals of Shri Baladevjew Temple has been gathered from the Servitors of the Baladevjew.

The deities of the temple are humanized Gods. Like human beings, their daily activities start from the morning and continue till night. They get up in the morning with invocation to them through '*Mangala Arati*', brush their teeth, bathe, take meal, wash their face, take rest at noon, receive '*Sandhya Arati*' and after night offering they sleep. These rituals of

Baladevjew temple are made in consonance with the rituals performed in the Jagannath temple at Puri. Different *modus operandi* of human life have emerged within his cult to give it a unique status. In such context, the daily rituals of Baladevjew Temple are discussed chronologically.



Dwarafita

The first ritual of the day in the Baladevjew temple is ceremonial opening of the doors. The scheduled time for opening of the doors is 5 A.M. On specific occasions and for

Pakudi Bhoga from *Dhanu Sankranti* to *Makara Sankranti*, the *Dwarafita* (opening of the door) time is from 2 A.M. to 3 A.M. For the worship of the Triad, 6 Sevayatas are engaged. They are three *Palia Pandas*, one *Suara*, one *Barsheiti* and one *Mekapa*. The responsibility of opening doors is fixed on *Mekapa*. He is to open the doors with clapping hands early in the morning. After opening of the doors, the inner part of the temple is purified by sacred water^[1] by *Barsheiti*.



Jaya Mangala Arati

The most important ritual in the early morning is *Jaya Mangala Arati*. Initially *Arati* in camphor is made on specially designed brass and broze stands. It is called *Karpur Alati*.^[2] A lamp with 7 wicks is lit for each deity thereafter. It is called *Gota Alati*. The Sevayatas are involved for *Arati* work are three *Pallia Pandas*, one *Suara*, one *Barsheeti*. The ashes are distributed among the devotees after *Arati*.

Ulagi and Tadaplagi

After *Jaya Mangala Arati*, the next ritual is *Ulagi* or removal of the dresses and floral decorations of the deities of last night. The scheduled time for *Ulagi* is about 6.30 A.M. The three *palia pandas* go up to the *Ratna Simhasana* (throne) to remove the decorations, dresses and flowers of the deities and dress them with white dresses called *Tadapa* (Napkin) and *Uttariya* (drapery). The dressed removed are washed daily by a Sevayata called *Mekapa*. He is not washerman by caste. *Ulagi* flowers and *Tulasi* are distributed among the devotees as *Prasad*.^[3]

Abakasha

Abakasha^[4] is the morning ablution of the deities just like human beings, this includes cleaning of the teeth, scrapping of the tongue of the deities and thereafter giving them a pleasant bath symbolically. The scheduled time for *Abakasha* is 6.30 AM to 7.30 AM. *Abakasha* puja is done by three *Pandas* below the *Simhasana*. Soft twig and tongue-cleaner are shown to deities with appropriate *Mudras* as if they do brush. Thereafter, along with chanting of Vedic *Suktas* water mixed with camphor, Aamla, sandalpaste; milk and curd

are poured on the reflection of the deities on bronze mirrors placed in front of them and it is considered as if they take their bath. It is actually a Mantra Snana. Then the Astrologer (Khuri Nayak) explains about the Tithi and other astrological details of the day. On the specific occasion of birthday of any deity, Nakshatra Bandapana is also undertaken.

The bathing of Garuda in the Nata Mandap follows that of the principal deities. Garuda Sevak brings Chunera water and undertakes the bath of Sri Garuda. The bath water of the deities and that of Garuda is considered as Prasad and invariably useful for the patients. During the Abakash rites; public are not allowed to enter into the sanctum, but they can have a glimpse of the deities, standing just in front of the Bhitara Katha Argali. After Abakasha the deities are dressed with *Pata vastra and mauli*. Then Akhand Mekap places two perpetual lamps (Akhana Baitha) near the Simhasan, which remains burning for whole day and night.

Ballava Manohi

The next ritual is *Ballava Manohi*. This is the breakfast of the deities and the scheduled time is 9 AM. The items offered are *Ukhuda* (popcorn), *Kora* (coconut-sugar-plum), *Muga* (Mung), *Navata* (stem prepared from sugar-curd), *Dahi* (Curd), *Dalimba* (made of flour and molasses) and *Bidiapani* (betel).^[7]

Khechudi Dhupa

The *Khechudi Dhupa* is scheduled to be held from 11 AM to 12 Noon. The items offered are *Khechudi*, *Kshiri*, *Kantipitha*, *Ganja*, *Sakara*, *Bhaja*, *Marichapani*. These items are prepared by *Suaras*.^[8] The another Servitor named *Mekapa* supplies fine rice,



Mung dal, vegetables ghee etc. to the *Suaras*. Such variety of *Prasadas* are distributed among the *Sevayatas*. After this Dhupa, the dresses of the deities are again changed.

Dwiprahara Dhupa

This is the mid-day meal of the deities. The time scheduled for *Dwiprahara Dhupa* is from 3 PM to 3.30 PM. The materials used for this *Dwiprahara Dhupa* are provided by Endowment Department of the Baladevjew temple. The items offered to the deities are *Anna* (Rice), *Dali* (Dal), *Marichapani* (curry) etc. After offering, this becomes *Mahaprasada*, People are interested for this *Bhoga*. In the offering *Tulasi* leaf is used.^[9]

Madhyahna Pahuda

After the *Dwiprahara Dhupa*, comes *Madhyahna Pahuda*. This is the time for rest of the deities. They take rest till 6 P.M. The doors of the temple are closed till that period. After opening of doors in the evening, the removal of the dresses of the deities is made. The deities are dressed with new *Pata Vastra* with *Uttariyas Maulis* (Draperies). Then they take light food i.e. *Rasabali*, *Puri* and *Dalimba*.^[10]

Sandhya Arati

One of the important rituals of Sri Baladevjew temple is *Sandhya Arati*. The time scheduled for *Sandhya Arati* is 6.30 PM to 7.30 P.M. Many devotees gather to have *darshana* of the deities. *Kirtana* is also one of the items of nine devotions. It is done for a longer period. Amidst *Kirtana*, *Sandhya Arati* work is performed. The three Aratis offered during this period are *Karpur Arati*, *Gota Arati* and *Pistaka Arati*. This *Sandhya Arati*

is meant for betterment of the universe. Three *Pandas* one *Suara*, one *Basheiti* are engaged in this work.^[11]

Nisankhudi Dhupa

This *Dhupa* is done between 8 P.M. and 9 P.M. In this *Dhupa* items offered to the deities are *Anna*, *Dali*, *Bhaja*, *Marichapani*, *Kshiri*, *Kakara*, etc. After this, *Ulagi* and *Chatusama*^[12] are performed. The change of dresses of the deities is made. They are smeared with sandal paste made of musk, camphor, *Aguru*. This ritual is also called *Chatusama*.

Badasimhara Vesha and Badasimhara Dhupa

Amongst all the daily rituals, the most attractive is *Badasimhara Vesha*. The time scheduled for this *Vesha* is 10 PM. During this period, *Chaturddhamurti* look in *Badasimhara Vesha* is a colourful floral decoration with special items like *Karapallava*,^[13] *Kundala*, *Chandrika* and other attractive flowers. The deities are clad with Berhampur *Patas*, traditional Odishan tie and *Mauli*. Jayadeva's *Gita Govind* and other devotional songs make the atmosphere spiritual. The beautiful and smiling faces of the deities attract the devotees in large number. In this *Dhupa*, *Ghanavartd*^[14] is offered to the deities. The other items offered are *Dahipakhala*, *Navata* and *Bhaja*.

Badasimhara Dhupa is the last *Bhoga* of the deities of the day. The *Arati* is performed with *Puspanjali*.^[15] Then the deities go to bed for rest at about 11 P.M. The deities are placed on the Ratna Palankas. These are daily rituals of the deities. But, during festivals, this order changes with little difference. Thereafter the



temple is totally vacated. All the doors are closed and sealed. This work is done by the *Mekapa*, the key keeper of the temple.

Sri Baladevjew is a highly humanized deity. The gap between man and God has been bridged in Baladev cult. The daily rituals of the temple of Baladevjew are followed in the light of the Jagannath Temple of Puri. However, local variations add lustre to the daily rituals of Sri Baladevjew.

References :

1. Information gathered from Kamapal Patri, the *Sevayata* of Baladevjew Temple.
2. For this *Karpoor Arati* a good number of people of the locality gathered every morning and take away the ashes distributed to them by the *Pallia Pandas*. The ashes are considered as most sacred. (Interview with Nrusingha Charan Patri dt.22.08.2011)
3. Interview with Kamapal Patri on dt.03.04.2010.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Kamapal Patri informs that these items are to be prepared with utmost care by the Gudia-Brahmins (confectionary prepared by a special class of Brahmins.)
8. *The Sauras* prepare (*Khechudi Bhoga*. At present Gouranga Suara (Hagura Suara), the son of Bana Suara is preparing the items for *Khechudi Dhupa* along with other *Suaras*. As per his information, the face is to be covered with cloth when such items are prepared. No public is allowed to enter into the *Rosasala* (Kitchen) when these items are prepared. (Interview with Hagura Suara on 08.03.2011).
9. Balaram Suara, a servitor informs that the *Mahaprasada* is sold after the *Dwiprahara Dhupa*. Now-a-days, many people are preferring to take this *Mahaprasad* rather than going to Hotel.
10. Ibid.
11. Keshava Patri, one of the servitors of Baladevjew Temple explains that the term ‘*Arati*’ means greetings to God with devotion. Through *Arati*, the grace of the God is obtained. Further, he informs that the *Arati* is performed to purify the atmosphere. (Interview with Keshava Patra on 15.03.2011)
12. Keshava Patri informs that Chatusama consists of sandal, musk, camphor, aguru (scented oil) is applied on the body of the deities.
13. Keshava Patri further informs that *Karapallava* is made of *Sola* (a watery plant). It is offered on the hands of the deities.
14. Ibid. He further explains that ‘*Ghanavarta*’ is *Rabidi* (dense milk after boiling it for a longer period). He informs that this item was introduced for the first time by the Marathas in the Baladevjew temple.
15. Ibid. Sri Patri further informs that *Puspanjali* is performed at the end of the *Badasinghara Dhupa*. It is done to please the deities because mistakes, if any, during the period of offering, may be excused by the God.

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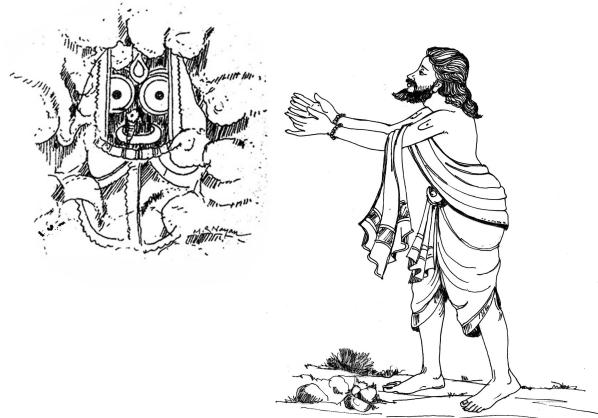




Soteriological Appeal in Salabega's Songs

Dr. Bibhudutt Das

In some of the songs of Salabega, we see an earnest soteriological appeal, that is, the poet's impassioned plea to man to prioritize the salvation of the soul. In philosophy, the doctrine of salvation is called soteriology. Salvation is necessary because it would free us from the cycle of birth and rebirth, the endless cycle from which there is hardly an escape. However, to attain salvation is difficult. What it exacts, among other things, is to renounce worldly pleasures and to direct one's attention to the divine. According to Buddhist philosophy, the attainment of Nirvana is contingent on this renunciation, and in *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna underscores such renunciation. Quest for salvation being an important aspect of Salabega's songs, we find Salabega as a supplicant praying to God to redeem him, but at the same time he struggles to train his mind to wean itself from mundane desires that could frustrate his God-realization. Though it seems that the poet addresses himself in his songs, indeed, he addresses all of us to surrender to God for the liberation of the soul. This essay discusses, in particular, two songs of Salabega, "Kahinki asichhu mana," and "Sumanare, nischaya e jeeva jiba" where the poet draws our attention to the transitory nature of human life and urges us to know the real meaning of our existence. The songs are intended to effect in us a spiritual change.



In Salabega's songs, we do not find any pictures of doubt, resentment or blasphemy which the poet entertains toward God, but in many of his songs, the poet desperately reiterates that whereas his beloved Lord has redeemed Draupadi, *mruguni* (doe), *gaja* (elephant), Bibhisana, Prahallad, and others, He does not listen to his prayers. Considering the fact that those who were redeemed by God moved Him by the intensity of their love and devotion, the poet doubts if he has that degree of love and devotion which could qualify him to get His grace. Thus, his own prospects of salvation seem to be fraught with uncertainties. However, the poet's overriding concerns lie in telling us the futility of worldly aspirations. As Niranjan Mohanty writes, Salabega conceived of the visible world as the world of illusion, for here nothing stays, nothing endures, nothing is permanent. The relationships, human or otherwise, are chances of equations. Everything flows out like time in the course of time. The fleeting nature of time, the impermanence of the body and of the physical world, the vulnerability of bondages made Salabega realize the significance of the other—the spiritual world, the ultimate Reality. He, therefore, insisted on man's devotion and dedication to the identity of the divine Reality (71-72).



In the poem “Kahinkī asichhu mana,” the poet’s quest for salvation starts with a self-examination where his own conscience stands defenseless:

*Kahinkī asichhu mana kisa neba painre
Asichhu langala tu jibu sunya hoire.
Ghai jaka mukula tu bandha kete bandhure
Ape male juga jae paralagi kandure.*

Here the poet’s conscience is apostrophized. The conscience that is addressed is not something that exists outside of the poet, but resides very much within him and influences his actions. But the poet makes tacit references not to the conscience but to our subservience to desire. It is conscience obfuscated by desire. It seems as if we are born only to pander to materialistic gratification and to amass, acquire or hoard as many things as possible, in the hope that these would give us happiness. In our pursuit of worldly enjoyments, we waste many hours of our lives, but when we realize, it is too late. This is the despair of the poet. Therefore he asks it pointblank: “Kahinkī asichhu mana kisa neba painre.” And the answer is “Nothing”.

Salabega’s ontological musings seem to border on melancholy, but we are made to realize the truth that we all have come and we all have to go, empty-handed. Though the poet makes us face a hard truth, he is not pessimistic. In the second line of the song, Salabega uses the words “langala” (naked) and “sunya” (empty-handed) which connote an essential nothingness that pervades our existence. Since human life moves between two “nothings,” what happens in-between might as well be nearer to nothing. Such a vision of life is likely to make us depressed. But hard truths not only depress us, they also enlighten. As we see, Salabega does not want to make us world-weary, but urges us for a spiritual

longing in preference to abandoning ourselves to ephemeral things of life. In order to highlight our pathetic condition, the poet further says that despite man’s endeavour to set things right, to solve the riddles of life, to avoid vicissitudes, to make things run according to his desire, he will fail because he is limited. The poet tells us our limitations, and his exhortations take us nearer to the path of salvation. But his arguments may be taken amiss if their import is missed. For example, when he says, “Ape male juga jae para lagi kandure,” he does not mean that we should hate the world, or we should be indifferent to people, or we should be engrossed in our own personal matters, but what he emphasizes is we know the potential disillusionment embedded in all our worldly attachments. What he seems to be saying is - live in the world, but love only the Lord. However, it is interesting to see that, as the poet says, God wants to be loved which is why He uses the “athakathi” to catch His devotees. Salabega writes, “Matighata panjurire palu suna sua re / Athakathi lagaichhi bhaba binodiare.” “Panjuri,” “sua,” and “athakathi” respectively mean cage, parrot, and a glued stick to catch parrots. “Matighata panjurire” refers to the destructible human body or in a sense this transient world we inhabit. Referring to the Lord as “bhaba binodia,” or the One who loves nothing but love, Salabega intends to make us feel the affection, which God has for us. As Salabega says, God loves us for that is what He can do. In his song “Eka to bhakata jeevana,” Salabega writes about this great bond between God and the devotees: “Eka to bhakata jeevana, bhakata nimante tora sankhachakra chinha. / Bhakata to pita mata bhakata to bandhu, bhakata hitare tora nama Krupasindhu. / Dhenu pachhe pachhe batsa game kheera lobhe, bhakata pachhare tuhi jau sehi bhabe.” In highlighting this relationship, Salabega suggests that salvation is within our reach. What



is needed on our part is our singular love to the Almighty: "Srirangacharan binuanya gati nahinre." In "Kahinki asichhu mana," Salabega emphasizes this focused attention on God, which the hallmark of one's true devotion to Him. As the poet Jagannath Das writes, "Sati yuvantinkara mane, njara swami thanti jenhe / Sehi prakare mora mana, to pade rahu Bhagaban" (As chaste wives think about none other than their husbands, O Lord, may my heart be always with You alone) (8).

Similar is this soteriological concern in another song of Salabega, "Sumanare, nischaya e jeeva jiba." The poet tells that we are mortal, but what would outlast this mortality is our understanding of it. Neither does he tell that we should always brood over the fact of death nor be oblivious of this inevitable thing of life, but he means that we remember God. Further, as he says, we should love to associate with the wise; we should be generous; we should go along the path of Dharma and do good deeds because these things are immortal: "Sadhu sange preeti dana dharma keerti ehi matra rahi thiba." In order to show how fragile the world is, the poet compares it with a makeshift house or a doll's house a child plays with, which is broken by him soon he finishes his play. It is revealing to see that the child finds that quite uninteresting which interested him so much. Similarly, nothing in this world can interest us for long. The poet, thus, impels us to go for something which can give us permanent, transcendental happiness. Not one's wealth, not beauty, not the ones whom one holds so dear to him can give this happiness since they are not the source of it. While the poet tells us to rethink our attachment to the material world, he gives us the clue to divine bliss:

*Mohara mohara boluachhu tuhi
moha maya samsarare
Male tu au ki leuti dekhibu*

*peerati bandhu jananku.
Bhaja Rama Krishna Govind
Gopal chinta kara mane niti
Kahe Salabega jatire yavana
manare nakara bheeti.*

At the core of the poet's expressions, we find his appeal to humanity to think of the deliverance from the worldly miseries that afflict us. However, Salabega's thoughts on salvation are not founded on his hatred of the world. Since hating the world would amount to hating the creation of God, Salabega does not hate the world. Nor does he think that to be born is a curse. What he means to say is that our desire for salvation has to be established on our love of life. What he emphasizes is our understanding of the purpose of our existence, which surely does not mean wasting ourselves in distractions, but in commanding our souls to God. *Gita* reminds us of God's assurance:

*Sarvadharmanparityajya mamekam saranam braja
Aham twam sarvapapevyo mokshayisyami ma sucha*
(Resigning all your duties to Me, the all-powerful and all supporting Lord, take refuge in Me alone. I shall absolve you of all sins, worry not) (Chapter 18. 66).

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Lord Buddha in the Cult of Lord Jagannath

Abhimanyu Dash



The Buddhist origin of Lord Jagannath was first propounded by General A. Cunningham which was later on followed by a number of scholars like W.W.Hunter, W.J.Wilkins, R.L.Mitra, H.K. Mahatab, M. Mansingh, N. K. Sahu etc. Since Buddhism was a predominant religion of Odisha from the time of Asoka after the Kalinga War, it had its impact on the life, religion and literature of Odisha. Scholars have made attempt to show the similarity of Jagannath cult with Buddhism on the basis of literary and archaeological sources. They have put forth the following arguments to justify the Buddhist origin of Lord Jagannath.

(1) In their opinion the worship of three symbols of Buddhism, Tri-Ratna such as the Buddha, the Dhamma (Dharma) and the Sangha denotes to the worship of Trimurti of the Jagannath cult, i.e. Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra.

(2) The old Pali literature refers to Lord Jagannath.

(3) In Buddhism, Dharma is considered as female and in Tri-Ratna, She is regarded as sister which is very similar to the worship of Subhadra as the sister of Jagannath.

(4) At present an image of Buddha at Ellora is called Jagannath which proves Jagannath and Buddha are identical.

(5) The Buddhist celebration of the Car Festival which had its origin at Khotan is similar with the famous Car Festival of the Jagannath cult.

(6) Indrabhuti in his 'Jnana Siddhi' has referred to Buddha as Jagannath.

(7) There are similar traditions in Buddhism as well as in the Jagannath cult. Buddhism was first to discard caste distinctions. So also there is no caste distinction in the Jagannath temple at the time of taking Mahaprasad. This has come from the Buddhist tradition.

(8) On the basis of the legend mentioned in the 'Dathavamsa' of Dharmakirtti of Singhal, scholars say that a tooth of Buddha is kept in the body of Jagannath. The image of Jagannath which contains a mysterious substance thickly padded in silk and replaced in the new image at the time of Navakalevara is taken as the tooth relic of Buddha.

(9) There is a legend centering round the incomplete figure of Buddha at Bodhagaya which has similarity with the incomplete image of Jagannath.

(10) In Odia literature Lord Buddha has been accepted as an incarnation of Vishnu instead of



Jagannath. Jayadeva, an Odia poet of 12th century has described Buddha as the incarnation of Lord Jagannath. Later on, Sarala Das, Achyutananda Das, Divakara Das, Balaram Das, Jagannath Das and Sikkha Das have accepted Buddha instead of Jagannath as the ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

On the basis of the above arguments it will be difficult to conclude that the cult of Jagannath originated from Buddhism. The following counter arguments can be taken as the basic points to reject the cult of Jagananth originated from Buddhism.

(1) The identification of three images of the Jagannath temple, Puri with Buddhist Trinity or Tri-Ratna is not acceptable because the actual number of images in the temple are not three but four namely Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarsana described in the Agni Purana, Padma Purana, Brahma Purana, Narada Purana and Skanda Purana as 'Chaturddhamurti'. Further, if the number of images are actually three instead of four that can not constitute an argument worth the name in support of the thesis that the emblems are Buddhistic. In the Hindu or Brahmanical traditions there are several groups of three such as Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesvara; Rama, Laksmana, Sita; Krishna, Balarama and Subhadra. So, there can not be any valid reasons as to why the three incomplete images are to be taken Buddha, Dharma (Dhamma) and Sangha or the Tri-Ratna of Buddhism.

In addition to these, the Buddhists do not refer about the images of Laksmi, Goddess Earth, Madhava etc. which are a part of the seven images besides the four. Thus all the deities worshipped in Ratna Simhasana of the Jagannath temple, Puri are seven instead of Tri-Ratna of Buddhism.

(2) The word Jagannath has different connotations in the Pali literature of Buddhism in

ancient time which may not necessarily allude to the image of Jagannath at Puri. Further, Jagannath has also been variably used as an adjective to suggest the higher status of any God or even a king. As such, the word Jagannath in this context in no way justifiably be associated with the Jagannath of Puri.

(3) Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha are Tri-Ratnas of Buddhism. Dhamma is considered as female. Tri-Ratna emblems of Buddhism are found at Sanchi. General A. Cunningham has identified Dhamma with Subhadra of Jagannath triad. But there is no similarity of Dhamma symbol of Sanchi with Subhadra of Jagannath temple at Puri. Dhamma of Sanchi has hands whereas Subhadra has no hands. So it is difficult to identify Dhamma of Buddhism with Subhadra of Jagannathism.

(4) Calling the image of Buddha as Jagannath at Ellora does not mean Buddha and Jagannath are identical. The sculptures at Ellora flourished during the rule of the Guptas. Though Guptas revived Brahminical Hinduism yet they respected the deities of other religions like Jainism and Buddhism. At Ellora one finds coexistence of sculptures relating to Buddhism and Hinduism. This assimilation of cults and coexistence of sculptures might have led the people to mistakenly call the image of Buddha as Jagannath at Ellora. It is not a matter of surprise to link one image of a cult with that of the other. For example, the image of Mahavir Jaina of Jainism at the Beherana Dwara (gate) of the Jagamohan of the Jagannath temple of Puri is very often called as Mahavir Hanuman of Hinduism by some people. In similar way the image of Buddha at Ellora might be called as Jagannath.

(5) The evidence of the Car Festival to prove that the Car Festival of Puri is an imitation of the Car Festival of Lord Buddha at Khotan has no base at all because the chariots were in use since



the time of Vedic and Upanishadic periods. In Atharva Veda, there are references as to how the Gods were coming down by chariots. Attempt has been made by some scholars to link Ratha Yatra of Puri with the Buddhist Car Festival held at Khotan which is described by Fahien.

The Car Festival is the source of amusement of all over the world. It would therefore, be erroneous to link the festival of one place with that of the other. For instance, Bhubaneswar celebrates Ratha Yatra (Rukuna Ratha) festival in honour of Lord Lingaraj. Likewise a Car Festival is performed in Konark. Undoubtedly, each Ratha Yatra has its own individuality and origin. It thus logically follows that the Ratha Yatra of Jagannath at Puri should not be considered to have Buddhist origin.

(6) The Dhauli region of Odisha was once a Buddhist centre particularly after the Kalinga War of Ashoka. It is therefore, likely that Buddhism might have exercised some influence over the cult of Jagannath. Possibly, there arose a conflict between the Buddhists and the Hindus in the 7th or 8th century as a result of which Indrabhuti, a Buddhist of Sambalpur region effected a compromise by using the epithet Jagannath as a synonym of Buddha in his work 'Jnana Siddhi'. This religious conflict between Hinduism and Buddhism is evident in the Bhaskaresvar temple in Bhubaneswar where a huge Buddhist Ashokan pillar is converted into Sivalinga which is still worshipped today. So Indrabhuti might have made a compromise between Buddhism and Hinduism through his writing which seems to be an influence of Buddhism over Jagannath cult.

(7) Buddhism is sectless or castelessness appears to be wrong. Lord Buddha, desired to be born in a higher caste family as is cited in the 'Lalitavistara'. Further, Jagannath does not accept caste barrier is an original idea of Hinduism. Such references have found place in several Hindu

Puranas. Buddhist might have been influenced by such a catholic Hindu practice rather than Buddhism influencing the cult of Jagannath. The practice of taking Mahaprasada regardless of caste distinctions can not prove the Buddhist origin of Jagannath cult. It is mentioned in the Puranas and the Tantric texts that Mahaprasada is to be taken regardless of caste or sex. Those Puranas are Padma Purana, Visnu Purana, Bhavisya Purana, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Varaha Purana, Garuda Purana and the Tantric texts like the Brahmayamala and Rudrayamala.

(8) The Buddhist legend suggesting that a tooth of Buddha was kept inside the body of Jagannath has no basis. That a Buddhist monk named Ksemathera presented a tooth of Buddha to the king of Kalinga who built a *stupa* for its worship has also no historical basis and is not supported by any other evidence. Even H.K.Mahatab, a staunch supporter of the Buddhist origin theory does not even accept the story since it has no historical base. Further, the Buddhist tradition also prescribes that no symbol of Sakya Muni is to be worshipped secretly. Apparently, there is no relation of this story with the development of the cult of Jagannath. Moreover, the Nabhi Brahma of Jagannath, rescued by Bisara Mohanty from the attack of Kala Pahada is not to be confused with tooth. This Nabhi Brahma transferred by the Daitas on the occasion of the Nava Kalevara festival is never called a tooth.

Again, some of the temple ministrants are of the opinion that the sacred objects inside the Vigrahas are not bones but Tantric *yantras* with the Salagramasila. It will be too hazardous to take them as tooth relics of Buddha. In the Hindu Dharma Sastras, the worship of bone is not permitted. But wherever a Buddhist relic either of Buddha Himself or of His disciples could be found, *stupas* were built and the places remained



continuously Buddhist sanctuaries with the Viharas all round the holy places. The temple of Lord Jagannath does not have any such tradition and all the Mathas old and new are Hindu Mathas. It is true that Hiuen Tsang mentions five Buddhist Viharas in the town of Che-li-ta-lo, identified by a few scholars with the present Puri. This identification, however, is not universally accepted and it is not at all safe to come to any conclusion on the basis of this uncertain data. So the legend mentioned in the 'Dathavamsa' of Dharmakirtti of Simhala is difficult to accept. Rather, Che-li-ta-lo is not Puri but Buddhist Viharas of Ratnagiri, Udayagiri, Lalitagiri, Langudi hills and their adjacent areas of Jajpur district of Odisha out of which two teeths of Lord Buddha were collected from Ratnagiri Vihara and kept in State Museum, Bhubaneswar in 2013. These teeths of Buddha were worshipped by Buddhist monks in ancient days and not in the body of the Jagannath triad of Puri.

(9) R.L. Mitra has matched the story behind the incomplete image of Lord Buddha of Buddhagaya with the incomplete image of Lord Jagannath of Puri. He relates the legend of image making of Buddha at Buddhagaya as described in the accounts of Chinese Pilgrim Hiuen Tsang of 7th century A.D. with that of the legend of image making of Jagannath at Puri. As per Hiuen Tsang's account no sculptor was willing to make an image of Buddha but a Brahmin came forward to do it. The sculptor proposed that the door of Buddha Vihar would not be opened before a stipulated period of six months that was required to complete the image. But before the stipulated period was over the Buddhist monks violated the fixed time of image making and opened the door of Buddha Vihar and found the incomplete image of Dhyani Buddha and disappearance of the sculptor. R.L. Mitra relates this legend with the legend Jagannath, Puri. But in the opinion of S.N.

Dash the Buddha legend of Buddhagaya is an imitation of the legend of Jagannath of Puri. Further, in Buddhism, a Brahmin sculptor made Buddha's image of Buddhagaya whereas in the Jagannath cult, the legend expressed that the Brahma prepared the image of the Jagannath triad. So the incomplete image of Buddha at Buddhagaya is not the same as the incomplete image of the Jagannath triad.

(10) The Jagannath trinity is made of wood and called as 'Daru Devata' whereas the image of Lord Buddha is made of either stone or any metal and not of wood. Further, the tradition of image making of Buddha began since the time of the Kushan rule but image making of Jagannath trinity goes back to the hoary past. Hence, there cannot be any similarity between these two religions.

(11) Inspite of above counter arguments which disallow the similarities between Buddha and Jagannath yet there are some points to argue the influence of Buddhism on the cult of Lord Jagannath. Much before the origin of Buddhism in 6th C.B.C. there was worship of Lord Jagannath at Puri. In 3rd C.B.C. Ashok conquered Kalinga (Odisha) and spread Buddhism in India and abroad. Undoubtedly, Puri was a part to that. This caused influence of Buddhism on Jagannath cult. The people of Kalinga originally aborigines, accepted Buddhism as their religion but not remained aloof from worshipping Lord Jagannath. Gradually, Buddhist way of worship influenced over Jagannath cult.

In 318 A.D. Raktabahu attacked the Jagannath temple (not present structure). The priests took away Jagannath trinity to Sonepur (Sonpur) and hid underground for safety. In 9th century A.D. Adi Sankaracharya came to Puri and found no Jagannath trinity in the then dilapidated small Jagannath temple. Simultaneously Yayati-I, the Somavamsi King was



in search of Lord Jagannath during the holy bath of the day of Govinda Dwadasi in the Mahodadhi at Puri. Both the King and Adi Sankarcharya took a mission of searching for Jagannath and proceeded to Sonepur. With much difficulty they unearthed the Jagannath trinity and brought them back to Puri for worship. After arriving at Puri Sankaracharya helped the King to reinstall the Lords on Ratnasimhasan. A new temple of Jagannath was reconstructed for the reinstallation of the new deities.

During his stay at Puri Sankaracharya defeated Buddhist intellectuals and a compromise took place. Jagannath cult revived and Buddhism assimilated in this cult. Gradually Buddhism became a part and parcel of Jagannath religion.

In 12th C.A.D. Jayadev, a great devotee of Lord Jagannath wrote his famous ‘Gitagovinda’ in which he described Buddha as an incarnation of Jagannath. Possibly from that time onwards Buddha got a place in the Jagannath temple. Dasavatara concept began from the time of Jayadev. Buddha was considered as an Avatar (incarnation). Even Jayadev stayed most of his time in the Dasavatara Matha of Puri located near Gundicha temple which is another proof of origin of Dasavatara concept.

In Odia literature Buddha has been accepted as an incarnation of Vishnu instead of Jagannath. Sarala Das in his Odia ‘Mahabharat’ of 15th century, Achyutananda Das in his ‘Garuda Gita’ and ‘Sunya Samhita’, Divakar Das, Balaram Das, Jagannath Das, Sikhar Das and Nilambar Das in his ‘Deula Tola’ have accepted Buddha instead of Jagannath as the ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

In addition to literary evidences, sculptural evidences are more vital to focus Buddha as ninth incarnation in the Jagannath temple itself. On the outerwall of the Jagannath temple, Puri, in both

north west and south west side of the Parsvadevata temple of Nrusimha, images relating to Dasavatara are exhibited, among them Buddha is included as ninth incarnation. Undoubtedly one must be clear that Buddha had been accepted as an Avatar in the temple of Jagannath in centuries past which came to knowledge of ASI after deplastering of the main sanctuary.

Inspite of all above arguments in favour and against the position of Lord Buddha in the cult of Jagannath one must be clear that the temple of Lord Jagannath originally is neither a Buddhist sanctuary nor its presiding trinity is Buddhistic symbols. Only Buddhism had once upon a time great influence over Jagannath cult like Jainism. In Jainism it is also seen that an image of Lord Mahavir Jaina is fixed near the threshold of Beherana Dwara like that of Lord Buddha in the outer western wall of the Jagannath temple, very adjacent to the Parswadevata temple of Lord Nrusimha.

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Purusottama Sri Jagannath and Universal Religion

Damodar Pradhan



No doubt, the word Purusottama generally stands for Vishnu in the literature but in the Vaishnava iconography and theology it is the designation of a special deity which represents a particular aspect of Vishnu like Narayan, Madhav, Damodar, Srikrishna, etc all of which are considered as different forms of Vishnu. The wooden deity in the Jagannath Temple at Puri has been referred to as Purusottama all along in history. He is also called Jagannath. What led the people to choose this designation for their deity is worth investigating but this term Purusottama or Jagannath seems to have come into vogue around 13th century or at least has become more popular in this age. The Purusottama Mahatmya of Skanda Purana uses this epithet Jagannath for the deity and it has been increasingly popular in the Odia literature.

The Lord Jagannath is all pervading and he combines in himself all the main five Hindu deities namely Narayan, Rudra, Ganesh, Surya, and Durga. When he is on the Ratna Simhasana of his temple, He is Narayan, during Navakalebara ceremony he is considered as Rudra, during the Snana Jatra he is considered as Genesh (Gajanan) at the time of car festival he is taken to be "Surya Narayan". While enjoying the divine slumber (SnanaYatra) he becomes "Durga". Thus all the main deities of Hinduism

are considered to have merged in him. Thus he is represented as a supreme God to Saivites, Saktas, Ganapatyas, Sauras and Vaishnabs.

Purusottama – Vishnu is also known as Purusottama-Jagannath. Purusottoma- Jagannath cult is a resultant composite of many divine concepts and Gods starting from a local deity of an unknown tribe. Jagannath manifested himself as one of the greatest religious centers of the whole world and his religion is treated as universal religion. He is not meant only for any sector or tribe. In course of time he has become universal. He is linked with almost all the religions of the world.

Lord Jagannath is the God of all religions. The Jainas see him as Jineswar their beloved lord and the Buddhists see him as Buddha. Muslims like Kabir, Haridas, Salabega devoted their entire life before Lord Jagannath and sang Bhajans and Janana in praise of the Lord.

Jagannath culture is not restricted within the geography of our country. Rather it has influenced the people of Srilanka, Bangaldesh, Nepal and Mynamar. The ancient name of Prome city of Myanmar was Srikhethra. The famous Odia Sadhavas settled at Brahma Desh have developed the Jagannath culture in that country and built many Jagannath temples there and converted the name



of the Prome city to Srihetra. Such was the influences of Hindu religion as the principles and tenets of Hindusim did not clash with the people of Myanmar. Being a universal religion the Jagannath Dharma was well accepted there. Likewise we find compatibility of car festivals with perhera ceremony of Srilanka. At the time of Navakalebara we search for neem tree to build our Lord's physical shape and in the same manner the Srilanka people build their God in the woods of jack fruit tree. They follow the same path like our Nabakalebar ceremony. The sacred Neem log was selected as per the norms fixed in our scriptures and various rituals are observed before it was converted into statues. The king also takes part in the procession sitting on the back of the elephants. The resemblance we mark in both the religions while making the lord out of the log exhibits the influence of Jagannath culture in Srilanka. Bibhisan the mythological devotee of Ramchandra and brother of Rabana belong to Srilanka a Dravidian by birth was allowed to enter into the Jagannath temple at the time of pahandi to perform certain rituals. Is it not a sign of our universal brotherhood thinking. Even at the south side top of Lord Jagannath temple, Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra were there to facilitate the sacred vision of Bibhisan of the Lord on the airways.

In Bali island of Indonesia Lord Jaganath is worshipped as Siva. In our neighbouring country Jagannath worship is rampart and many temples are built to worship the Lord Jagannath. The king of Nepal Sri Sankar Dev had supplied "Brahma sila" the sacred black stone at the time of construction of the temple. For this sacrifice of the Nepal king, he was allowed to perform special Puja before the Lord Jagannath. Even his descendants are allowed to enter into the Jagannath temple in the south gate which is an unique tradition and honour given to the Nepal

king. In Bangladesh Jagannath temples are there which is the exhibition of universal brotherhood. The Pala king has constructed Jagannath temple at Dhaka in 12th century and from that time car festivals are being observed there.

The Sikh Guru Nanak was influenced by Lord Jagannath for which he visited his temple at Puri. For the Sikh devotees two monastery had been built by the Sikhs. The devotees come and stay there for sacred Darshan of Lord Jagannath. Even, the Sikhs have been allowed to perform certain rituals in the Jagannath temple. The two monasteries are Mongu Mutt and Chhauni Mutt which are very near to the Puri temple. The Pandas of Puri temple always extend heartiest cooperation to them treating them as their brothers. Guru Nanak stayed there with their followers while staying at Puri. Guru Nanak and his son Srichand came in contact with Chaitanya Mohaprabhu and spread the tenets of Hinduism. Guru Nanak displayed a miracle at Puri when he converted a little bit of sea water into saline free water. This action of Guru Nanak brought him much respect from the Puri people.

Guru Nanak prayed Lord Jagannath with the sky and stars keeping in mind. When he left Puri king Prataprudra Dev extended a glorious farewell and accompanied him upto the Jagannath Sadak and exhibited impeccable integrity in extending hospitality.

Lord Jagannath is not restricted within space and time. Many devotees of various faiths and religions have been attracted by the miracles done by the Lord. Jesus Christ was also influenced by the Jagannath Dharma and visited Puri temple as expressed by M. S. Levi in his book Gospel of Jesus Christ. But still there is debate whether Jesus visited Puri.

Santh Kabir and Hari Das two Muslim devotees had come to Puri to get the blessings of



Lord Jagannath. In 1512 Kabir arrived at Puri and in remembrance of his visit Kabir Chaura Monastery was built up in the sea shore which is still standing there.

In that monastery the wooden shoe and the crutches are still available in the monastery. It was said he kept the sea at bay with his crutches to control the audacity of the sea. This miracle of the Muslim devotees was highly admired by the people of other religions also. The devotees visiting the monastery were blessed with "tanka torani" and jhadu's touch by the Santh. Santh Kabir rose above sheer conservatism and worked for the salvage of the humanity. Santh Kabir believed in "Nirguna Brahma" but his devotion towards Lord Jagannath was passionate who got blessings from the Lord.

Santh Haridas, another Muslim and ardent devotee of Lord Jagannath spent his last life at Srikshetra Puri. He was born in a Muslim family at Josore District of Bangla Desh. His forefathers were Hindus but he was converted into Muslim by force by the rulers. Hari Das met Sri Chaitanya at Nabadwipa. As he was a Muslim his entry into the Jagannath temple was restricted but Sri Chaitanya arranged Mahaprasad for him. Sri Chaitanya met him regularly and offered sacred Tulsi leaf to him. His abode was named as Siddha Bakula Mutt which is very much present now.

Muslims like Santh Kabir and Hari Das have been deeply influenced by Lord Jagannath and surrendered before him with heart and soul. Non Hindus like poet Salabeg all along praised the Lord in his poems. He was overwhelmed with joy when Lord Jagannath detained his chariot on the grand road of Puri during the car festival with a view to give his disciple a glimpse of his body. This was the reciprocation of Lord Jagannath to his devotee even if the devotee is a non-Hindu. The father of Salabega, Lalabega was a top

bureaucrat under Mughal administration. In his youth he hijacked the army and got severe injury in the battle field and there was no hope for his recovery. On the advice of his mother, who happens to be a Hindu Brahmani, Salabega worshipped the Lord and got cured. Having such experience Salabega threw his life before the Lord as a staunch devotee and created some ever green songs in praise of the Lord which are very popular among the mass till today. However Muslims and Hindus are poles apart in their religious belief, the mortal remains are kept in the holy grand road of Puri near Bada Chhata Math and his Samadhi was built there. Salabega spent the most of his life in that Matt. Some research scholars visualize presence of some symbols on the face of Lord Jagannath. The half moon posture on leap and a star on the nose of the Lord are at par with Muslim symbols.

In Odisha the Hindus pay much respect to the Muslim shrines. The God "Satyapira" is worshipped by both the communities - Hindus and Muslims. This is a unique example of religious fraternity. In medieval period although some Muslim generals like Kalapahad created havoc in Hindu temples, yet most of the generals are moderate and believe in religious integrity. They also equally pay respect to Hindu temples. There was no restriction in taking Mahaprasad unitedly. In 1626 a Muslim pilgrim Mohammad Bin Amir had written "In the medieval period there was no objection to Muslims entering into temple of Lord Jagannath. The Muslims used to honour Hindu shrines and the Hindus also honour Muslim shrines.

Such was the relation between the two communities Hindus and Muslims, a unique combination of Hindu - Muslim relationship.

The epic Janasidhi, written by King Indrabhuti of Ujjain in 9th century demonstrates



that Lord Jagannath was worshipped by the Jainas as their esteemed God. Jaina Dharma is an ancient religion whose statues are recovered in Mahenjodaro and Harappa civilization. It is also historically established that the Jainas are the first among the statue worshippers. In eighteenth century B.C the Jaina Guru Parswanath preached Jainism in Odisha which is evident from the stone carvings available at Khandagiri. Hence, in the Hindu religious life there was a special place for Jainism.

The Kalinga king Karkandu was the disciple of Parswanath and being influenced by Jainism he established the statue of Rusavnath in Purusottam Kshetra. In later stage the name was converted to Jinanath. In the words of eminent researchers Jinanath is worshipped as Jagannath.

The relation between Hinduism and Jainism was epoch making. In fourth century B.C the Magadha king Mahapadmananda took away the Kalinga Jina to its capital Pataliputra as a token of his victory over Kalinga. Subsequently it might have known as Jinasana. In sixth century B.C the Kalinga king Chetak invited the last Jinatirtha Mahavir Bardhaman to begin the preaching of Jainism and accordingly the Jinatirtha started preaching at Udayagiri of Bhubaneswar. During first century B.C. the Kalinga King Chediraj Mahameghavahana Kharavela defeated the Magadha king Bruhaspati Mitra and brought back the Kalingajina or Jinasan. The elephant cave inscription is the source of its information. The primitive name of Purusottom was Pihunda and king Kharavela celebrated his victory at Jaina vihar of Pihunda. Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang has written the presence of hundreds of Jaina vihar in Kalinga. This shows the popularity of Jainism in the land of Purusottam.

Based on historical documents and popular belief it was observed that Lord

Jagannath was the Jaina Lord. Various scholars and researchers have opined Jagannath as Jaina Institution. The glorious Kalpabata is having a unique background in Hindu mythology. The famous Kakabhusandi expressed his witness regarding the construction of Jagannath temple. It is believed that the desire of the devotee gets fulfilled if he ties a potsherd on the branches of Kalpabata while watching the Nilachakra. This belief has been reinforced by the writing of Skandha Purana "Nyagrodham Drustwacha Narayanam Kalmasam." On a simple analysis of both the religions it is crystal clear that Purusottam Jagannath is vividly linked with Jaina Dharma which is one step move towards universal religion. Apart from that Vishnu Puran and Srimad Bhagabat also discussed about Rishovnath, the Jaina Guru.

The Jainas were the first idol worshipper in the world. To universalize the gospels of Jaina culture in their own religion they have prepared the black stone statue of the lord which was subsequently turned to wooden statues without leg. It is deemed that in car festival it is statue of Jaina trinathakari who are sitting on it while the car is on move Jaina adi Tirthnakar was conceived on the Asadha Sukla Trutiya the day of car festival, hence the day is having much importance.

Lord Jagannath is identified as Purusottam which is derived from "Jina" as advanced by the scholars. The worship of Lord Jagannath is derived from the worship of "Rishavnath". In eighth century B.C. the King of Uddiyen Indrabhuti wrote the famous treatise *Jnanasidhi* enumerating the tenets of the religions which was prefaced by the Verse "Pranipatya Jagannath Sarba jinabararjita". This verse established the jnatwa of Lord Jagannath thus making him the emperor beyond Hinduism. The legless God trio" Jagannath, Balabhadra and



Subhadra symbolizes the treeratna of Jaina readings.

The Hativesha of Lord Jagannath has got a tremendous resemblance with Jaina belief as elephant is treated as a sacred animal in their religion. Believer in non-violence, the Jainas' have conceived the idea of "Banchabata" which is at par with Jagannath Dharma. The 22nd Tirthankaras' of Jaina are conceived as "Baisi Pahacha", nos. of the 22 entrance steps of Lord Jagannath temple of Puri. Is it not the evidence of universalism of Jagannath Dharma.

The famous pond "Swetaganga of Panchatirtha of Puri is also linked with Jainadharma as per historical evidence. There is a huge stone still lying near Swetaganga pond whose name is Saktisila or Kalinga Kotisila. The Jaina mendicants have tremendous weakness for this stone as they believe that a huge number of Jaina mendicants got salvation at Swetaganga. This holy pond of Swetaganga proves that this Purusottam Kshetra of Lord Purusottam was a Jaina religion centre in the past.

On deep introspection it is realised that Jagannath Dharma is such a religion which amalgamates many religions within it which is the unique example of universal faith and thought.

Lord Jagannath is also worshipped as Buddha by the Buddhists from time immemorial. Otherwise the Dasabatara statue would have not been replaced by the statue of Lord Jagannath in Jaipur. In this regard Dr. Mahatab said:

"Jagannath is another name of Buddha as known from Tibetan sources. So the name of Jagannath is of Buddhist origin. Later on Jagannath was identified with Vishnu when the Tantras were written.

Under the influence of Buddhistic thought, there is no caste discrimination in Jagannath temple

Puri. For that reason Sri Balaram Das in his treatise "Bhaba Samudra" wrote "Natha to Khetra sana bada nahin, Brahmana chandala sari tui".

That means, O Lord, in your abode there is no difference between Brahmin and *chandal*. Both of them are equal.

The Tri Ratnas ideology of Buddhism is reflected as Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra, worshipped on the Ratna Singhasan.

The car festival of Lord Jagannath is also influenced by Buddhist philosophy as held by the historians.

Sir Cunningham has written.

I was first led to this opinion in 1851, by the discovery of three of these symbols set up together in one of the Sanchi Sculptures. Since then I have found Jagannath figures are used in all almanacs of Mathura and Benares as the representatives of Buddha in the Buddha Avatar of Vishnu. The last seems to me to be conclusive but I may add this bone (said to be of Sri Krishna) must be a relic of Buddha, and that the nude figure of Jagannath in which it is contained is one of the old Tri-Ratna or triple green symbols of Buddhism tired.

Hence, the Sanatan Dharma of Lord Jagannath takes Buddha within himself.

Lord Jagannath symbolizes the union of all religions in a single entity. He is above consideration of caste, religion, the rich or the poor. The car festival is conducted precisely with this purpose. He belongs to all and none is farther from Him. Of course, there are certain restrictions as to the entry of non-Hindus into the Jagannath Temple. We do not say whether this is right or wrong. But let us consider how far it is justified to



alienate them from the Lord, at least during this car festival. A religious institution functions according to an order. We know that saint Kabir was brought up in a Muslim weaver family. In the 14th century, during the time of Kabir, fanaticism and bigotry were rife in the Hindu and Muslim communities. Since Kabir was a believer in the Nirguna Param Brahma, and a worshipper of Ram, his attitude to all was full of love, beyond the distinctions of caste. He saw Ram and Allah as equal. In his mission of propagating his principles, he was in search of a right place, and he found it at Puri. He was delighted to find this place a perfect symbol of love and unity where people belonging to different castes feed each other the Mahaprasad and forget all differences. Influenced by the worship of the idol of Jagannath as well as the glory of a transcendental conception of God, he made his sojourn at Puri and founded a Mutt near Swargadwara, known as Kabir Chaura. Puri has a distinct Mutt culture and unique tradition of its own, and almost all the mutts are related to Jagannath. The heads of the Mutts also perform certain holy services on the chariots such as Chamara Seva. There are proofs that Santh Kabir also performed this service. Thus it would be erroneous to say that non-Hindus did never mount the chariots. There are also two Mutts still stand at Puri, established by the Sikh Guru Nanak order, as the emblem of the mutt culture. One is Mangu mutt and the other, one is Chauni Mutt. Both the mutts are in the service of Lord Jagannath, and the Sadhus in the Mutts also have access to the chariots.

A great son of Odisha and Jnanapitha awardee Surendranath Mohanty has authored two historical book : Nilasaila and Niladri Vijay. His descriptions of the invasion of the Jagannath Temple by the Muslim fundamentalist ruler Taki Khan and the relentless crusade of king Ramachandra Dev and the temple Sevayats to

save the idols from danger move to tears in the eyes of every Odia person. Crossing the fathomless waters of Chilika lake in the still of the night and placing the deities in safety in the Malakuda Ghat is surely a glimpse of valour displayed by the Odia people. Had the Odias given it to the Mughals, Jagannath would still have continued to be worshipped with all the *sodasa upachara puja*, but it would always have reminded us of our cowardice. Ramachandra Dev was resolute in re-installing Shree Jagannath, the leader of the invincible Odias' freedom struggle, again on the Ratna Simhasan. Standing near the Ghat, he only looked at Jagannath. He felt he had lost his right to touch the Lord since he has converted himself as a Yavan (muslim). Yet in a choked voice, he entreated him to be merciful. As Jagannath had wished, the Daitas requested Yavan Ramachandra Dev to take him from the boat. In Niladri Vijay, Mohanty's description of Ramachandra Dev touching Lord Jagannath has historical significance. Thus, it cannot be said that Yavanas had never touched Jagannath or mounted his chariot. Since Mohanty's description is based on the foundation of history, it cannot be taken as erroneous. Therefore, in certain circumstances, the fact of the Yavanas touching Jagannath seems to be just.

The renowned French historian M. Sylvain Levi in his famous work "Gospel of Jesus Christ" had written that Christ must have stayed for four years in the Jagannath Temple and got the inspiration from the Jagannath cult for the propagation of his doctrines. Sylvain's account proves that Christ entered the Jagannath Temple and became closer to Jagannath. As for the entry of Christians into the Gundicha temple, it can be further said that except at the time of the car festival, in the remaining days of a year, Non-Hindus could enter the Gundicha temple, where the lord stays for 7 days in car festival. This was



the practice up to the year 1970. This writer's family had undertaken the management of the Gundicha Temple from 1964 to 1970 on behalf of the temple administration and had witnessed the entry of all loving devotees, irrespective of religions, and further it had found no restrictions imposed by the Temple Administration. It is difficult to understand as to why the administration took a different stand from 1970 onwards. It can be ascertained that the entry on Non-Hindus to the Gundicha Temple is a fact where the lord stays at the time of car festival. But how far it is justified not to allow them from mounting the chariots ?

In 1719 Saka era of Gajapati Divyasingh Dev, Aurangzeb's turpitude troubled Hinduism a lot and he had ordered to stop the car festival. But when the royal envoy Ramdaiti went to Aurangzeb to get his permission for the festival, Aurangzeb dreamt of Jagannath telling him to resist from this act, and thus he ordered through Murshid Quili Khan for conducting the festival. The car festival was conducted in a grand way. This incident clearly shows the influence of Jagannath on all, and Aurangzeb being a Non-Hindu and a cruel ruler, was forced to carry out the instructions of Jagannath. He had also acknowledged the existence of Jagannath. Thus, it is difficult to see the justification behind forbidding the Non-Hindus to touch the Lord, at least when he is outside the temple.

Darubrahma Darumaya Jagannath manifests himself on the chariot. Both the (chariot) *ratha* and the *rathangī* become one and invisible. Nilamanou treatise tells that "nandighosh ratharudha pratyaksha vamana swayam". The unique experience of mounting the chariot of Jagannath and seeing him there gives ineffable joy to the devotees, and this fact has deeper significance. When he touches chariot Nandighosh, the devotee feels like touching the divine body of the Lord. We know how Jagannath

halted his chariot for the beloved devotee Salabega who was far away from Puri on the day of the festival and eager to see Jagannath on the chariot. Jagannath never thought to which caste or religion his devotee belonged. Salabega has written lovingly:

*"Sehi nandighosh arudha Vamana
Charane thanu mo mana
Rathapatha padi kaibalya bhunji
Jau e yavan jiban"*

Thus Yavan Salabega is not just a devotee of the Lord, he has also eaten the Mahaprasad. If there are no restrictions about a Yavan eating the Mahaprasad, then why he is to be forbidden to touch the Lord outside the temple? Cannot there be even a partial compatibility between the people of two different religions worshipping the same idol? Pundit Satya Narayan Rajguru has mentioned that Lord Satya Narayan, worshipped in Jagannath Temple at Puri is the first incarnation of Jagannath and is also worshipped as Satyapir by the Muslims also. Is it not a mark of the unity of religions? Then will it not be justified to allow them to mount the chariot? There is a description in the Parashar Samhita:

*"Desha bhange parabase be byadhisu byas neswapi
Rakshadeva swadehadi pascharadham
samacharet
Apāt kaletu samrapte souchcharman binayet
Swayam samuddharat paschat susthordharmannam
samacharet."*

These lines state that under such circumstances like insurgency, deportation, disease famine, etc., one may stop practicing his own religion for one's safety, and later when the situation improves, one may perform one's *swadharma* and duties again. It is true that Gajapati Ramchandra Dev was converted to Islam under duress, and it was for the sole purpose of saving the idol and protecting Hindu religion. Had it not been so, the repercussion on Hinduism



and on Odisha, following the invasion of Odisha by the Non-Hindu rulers would have been unimaginable. When Gajapati was divested of his power to the administrator, Madhubabu could become successful in restoring the prestige of Odisha by fighting and winning the case. Though he himself was a Non-Hindu, does not he deserve to touch Lord Jagannath?

The universality and the glory of Jagannath is a rare thing in the history of religions in the world. Jesus, the Son of God, has derived inspiration from Jagannath. Muslim devotees like Kabir, Salabega, Yavan Haridas have surrendered their souls completely to Purushottama Jagannath. Throughout their lives, they have sung the glory of the Lord. But the fact of forbidding them to touch Jagannath outside the temple raises an important question, which is a matter of study by religious *pundits* and researchers. It is not that all the non-Hindus are the devotees of Jagannath. In them, many blaspheme think that Jagannath is a wooden idol. One such is Mr. Sterling who commented so seeing the *pahandi* of Jagannath: "I can't understand what joy the Hindus get from playing with this idol in the mud and slum of Bada Danda".

It can be very well concluded that a Non-Muslim administrator who can utter such profanities knows no meaning of religion. How could Mr. Sterling know the inextricable bond between the literature, culture, tradition of people and their God in public? Perhaps not. However, it is a different issue whether the non-Hindus having no faith or respect for the Jagannath cult be given the opportunity of touching the Lord. At present, this delicate issue demands careful thought. Sankaracharya of Puri has been entrusted with this responsibility. May be, he is likely to give his views from a scriptural standpoint.

The eminent scholar Sri K. C. Mishra has written in his book, the cult of Jagannath "All people irrespective of caste, creed and religion can ofcourse get maximum facility as to the seeing, touching and worshipping of the lords placed on Rathas. This is possible because the evil of untouchability is conspicuously absent there".

This observation of Sri Mishra has been strongly accepted by the authorities of Calcutta University hence, this chapter be ended here and non-Hindus should be allowed to climb the chariot on car festival.

From time immemorial Lord Jagannath is worshipped by Sabaras, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians. Universal religion, so to say cannot be differentiated from Lord Jagannath or Purushottam. Lord Jagannath symbolizes "Sarbam khalidwam Brahman". In every creature the existence of the Lord is there. In the language of another Veda "Sarba Bhutantaratma "Ba" Atmabat sarbabhutesu". That in every creature Brahma exists. This is our national culture. The essence of our religion is "Basudeva Sakutumbam". The entire universe is our family. The difference between human beings between state and states in this world has got no meaning in the eyes of the Lord. Jagannath is the culmination of all religions. In him rest all the religions of the world. The Lord who absorbs all the pains of human beings, who stand at the time of needs is ever-pervading. In him there is no consideration of rich and poor, big and small. He is not the biggest deity of Odisha or Odia, He is the Lord of the Universe. The difference is He appears before any body in any manner provided you pray him in same breath.

Damodar Pradhani, Sevayat, Lord Jagannath Temple, Puri.



Introduction:

Chodagangadev (1078-1147) and Jajatikeshari shaped the temple what it looks today. The ancient temple of Jagannath at Puri stands on an area of 10 acres. Its height is 214 feet from ground level and is 181 feet above the inner platform of the temple. At the top of the temple is an east-facing wheel named Neelachakra (The Blue Wheel). Its height is 11 feet 8 inches, diameter 7 feet 6 inches; thickness 2 inches; central small circle has a dia of 2 feet and 2.5 inches; there are 8 spokes; its weight 15,000 kg and is made of eight kinds of metals.²

In 1230 AD King Ananga Bhima Dev III declared that Jagannath was the Real Ruler and that he was His representative only.

But as time passed in 1568 Kalapahada, a Moghul general marched towards coastal Puri. In the burning spree the idols of worship in and around Puri were destroyed. This incident of history could have been the end of Jagannath cult.

But soon Ramachandra Dev, a local princeling managed tactfully, to retain the cult. His descendants are still known as the Gajapatis of Puri. Gajapatis are titular kings. They are spiritual kings and also the principal servitor¹ of the deity. The inseparability of Gajapati kings and the cult

Puri Rath Yatra

Sashibhusan Rath

of Jagannath is a peculiar feature of Odishan history.

The Fascinating Deities :

The principal deities worshipped inside the Jagannath temple at Puri are all carved out of the wooden logs of the “neem tree” (*Melia Azadirachta Indica*). Neem has never been a rare species in India and over centuries has been available in abundance, hard, deeprooted and due to its bitterness is not affected by borer insects. It is therefore said “neem” is the most suitable principal tree for making deities.⁶ It is considered to be a male tree. As per the Shabara Tantra on a no moon night⁷ of a specific month the primeval Purusha manifests only in the predestined neem tree. That day onwards the tree emanates sandalwood odour instead of bitterness ! Such a tree is cut in summer and the log⁸ is ready for carving out the deities .

The average height of the deities is between 2.5 to 3 meters. The deities when touched one feels softness instead of the hardness of wood. It is because of the layers of pure silk wrapped on the core wooden body of deities. The colours of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are black, white and yellow respectively. Social anthropologists interpret these colours to represent the three races of mankind



viz. Negroids, Europeans and Mongoloids. However, in the empirical language of physics black is the most ideal absorber of radiation, white a good reflector and yellow being one of the unadulterated primary colours. One often wonders why these earless, legless, tribal forms with oversized heads beckon to people for keeping the ancient traditions continue ! Interestingly the eyes of Jagannath are regular circles whereas the eyes of Subhadra and Balabhadra are oval. The head-top of Balabhadra is scalloped with a semi-circular lobe indicating the hood of a serpent; Subhadra's head-top resembles a tiara and Jagannath's head-top simply a straight line. Different meanings have been attributed to the deities through the ages by various sects and schools of thought in India.

The Daily Routine:

The three deities have dress regimen³ too Jagannath is dressed with clothes of prescribed colours viz. Sunday (red), Monday (white with black border), Tuesday (five assorted colours), Wednesday (blue), Thursday (yellow), Friday (white), Saturday (black). The deities are dressed up differently in accordance with the lunar cycle. The daily routine in the temple spans over the period 5 AM to 12 midnight. A number of micro-activities fill between the major routine activities described under Table-A.

A mystic touch is resplendent at the ‘kitchen’ inside the temple premises and the secret “6-fold worship” while offerings ‘food-stuff’⁴ to the deities. It is by exercising the ancient Mantras the “gross foodness” is converted to “the divine food”⁵ i.e. a sort of divinity is reinforced through the Mantra. Cooking has always been from the original produce of the land.

Renewal of the Deities :

A prolonged rainy season (stretched over two months)⁶ has occurred over the years in a

peculiar periodicity viz. at a gap of 8, 11, 19 and 27 years and renewal of the gross body of the deities were also made accordingly maintaining the same periodicity. Such renewals have occurred, as per available records :

***During 1000-1800 AD** it has occurred at a gap of 8, 11 and 19 years. Once after a gap of 27 years it has occurred in 1039 AD.

***During 1800—2008AD** it has occurred in 1809(+19), 1828(+8), 1836(+19), 1855(+19), 1874(+19), 1893(+19), 1912(+8), 1920(+11), 1931(+19), 1950(+19), 1969(+8), 1977(+19), 1996(+19), due in 2015.

Every year the temple activities are suspended for 15 days. During this period the tribal relations only are permitted to enter into the temple and stay¹⁰; others are not allowed. However this closure is extended for one and a half months in those years when renewal of the bodies are scheduled.

Renewal activity starts in the month of Chaitra Shukla Dasami. The search team takes the betel nut as a token of permission and commitment for the work to be executed. The team members go to Kakatpur (NE from Puri) and after taking bath in the river Prachi pray in the holy shrine of the reigning Mother Goddess Mangala and continue to fast and lie prostrated.¹¹ Rationalists will raise their eyebrows high if they hear that the Goddess directs the senior-most team member in the dream about the location of the neem trees, destined to be the body of the deities and in utter faith he with all his team members go to the “dreamt locations” by foot. Though it might seem incredible, all the four neem trees (fourth one being that of Sudarshana) satisfy the following qualifying prerequisites defining the suitability of the trees :

- Must have a wheel (Chakra) sign on the body of the tree,



- Poisonous snakes like cobra must be hiding under or in nearby anthill,
- A tamarind tree must be in the vicinity,
- A funeral yard in the vicinity of each tree,
- Each tree must have 4 to 7 branches over the main trunk,
- From ground level upto 10/12 feet it should be straight and solid,
- No nest on treetop.

The identified trees are cut after the prescribed rituals like 3 days fire sacrifice¹², then cutting the trees with golden axe, silver axe and iron axe in succession continues. A small cart with four wheels is made out of residual smaller branches and the main trunk of each tree is transported separately to Puri. The carts are pulled all the way to Puri by the devotees of the villages it passes through. After reaching Puri Grand Road the Gajapati is informed about the arrival of the sacred logs.

Then the logs are brought into the main temple through its northern gate¹³ before the scheduled date of “annual bathing ceremony” of the deities¹⁴ which occurs in June. The existing deities are bathed and the new logs are also bathed with ritual water drawn from specified sources. Next day onwards the carving activities commence in secrecy. Carving is done out of the trunks as per the laid down norms, at the prescribed place inside the temple premise¹⁵. Silk wrappings and face-painting jobs are done by hereditary functionaries. Their generations have thrived on the land provided by the temple. Before the specific no-moon night¹⁶ the new deities are fully carved out and on this specific night, at midnight hours the mysterious substance is transferred from the existing deities to the newly carved deities.

The Festive Yatra :

Every year in rainy season¹⁷ all the deities are brought down to the road from the womb of the temple¹⁸ by thousands of devotees known in Pahandi; each of them is slowly lifted, shifted and pushed ahead little by little by the people till they reach the raised platforms of the chariot¹⁹ and occupy the specified seat on their respective chariots. Chariots are called ‘rathas’ in scripture. These Rathas are made of wood and are pulled by people in the above sequence to cover a distance of 2 km from Jagannath temple to Mausima temple (Gundicha Mandir). Rathas are decorated with fabrics of specific colours viz. Taladhwaj (Green & Red), Devadalan (Black & Red) and Nandighosha (Yellow & Red).

In Upanishad “rath” is defined as “body” (Atmanam rathinam biddhi shareeram rathameva tu) and this distance is believed to represent symbolically the path. The ‘body’ (shareera) takes to reach its ‘destination’ (Moksha or Nirvana) and the yatra (the journey) is known as Rath Yatra or the Car Festival. Sri Aurobindo wrote, “But until Jagannatha’s chariot is built, the ideal community will not be created. That is the ideal, that is the best manifestation and image of the deepest and highest truth. Mankind tries to build it under the inspiration of the secret cosmic Person. But due to ignorance in its nature, it only succeeds in creating a different likeness -- either malformed, unfinished and ugly or half-beautiful or incomplete despite its beauty : a dwarf instead of a Shiva or a Rakshasha, else a half deity of the intermediate regions.....the true name of this Chariot of Jagannath is not society but commune. It is not a many-faced, loose-knit human collectivity or crowd but a free indestructible union, a divine commune evolved in joy by the power of the harmonising knowledge of self and God.....a day will come when inspired by the Will of World



Spirit, soul-unity will be manifested as the result of the synthesis and unification of knowledge, emotion and work; then will the Chariot of Jagannath come out on the thoroughfares of the world. Then shall its light spread in all directions. The Age of Truth will descend on the earth, the world of mortal man become the playground of the Deity, the temple-city of God, the abode of spiritual delight.”

The process is on and we all are in it ! It is only a matter of looking into it and understanding the meaning underneath.

The legend has it that a famous festival was going on in the eastern India where a deity seated on a chariot was being drawn by the devotees. People were immolating themselves under the chariot. One ponders it for the primeval and savage quality of the deity that we want to worship or for the sake of tradition that we want to pull the chariots lest the ominous might befall on mankind or is it a Grand Festival of Joy ?

The Cult as the Ultimate Panacea :

Jagannath transcends all forms and is beyond the limits of an icon . Cults and religious diversities have confluenced in this ancient deity which can possibly save the world when in despair. For the people of Odisha Jagannath is the Ista Dev. W.W.Hunter wrote, “The true source of Jagannath’s undying hold consists in the fact that He is the god of the people. As long as His tower rises upon the Puri sands there will be in India a perpetual and visible protest of equality of man before God.”

It is also written "Sarvendriya gunabhasam sarvendriya vivarjitam sarvashye pravumeeheenam sarvashye sharam brihat " which means He is the Ultimate Giver of Immortality; He is the Guiding Force of the past,present and future and also all people who live on food.

Although senses are indicated in Him there are no senses. Although He regulates everything as the Supreme and Ultimate yet He gives protection to all. Sri Jagannath is the Saviour, the Forgiver, the Compassionate, the Supreme, the Inexpressible and the Infinite.

Seeing the deities inside the temple is a cosmotheandric experience, an experience which contains the emerging religious consciousness. *Eko aham bahusyam* (He alone desired to be many) - the primordial cause and effect of creation. Akaybaham jagatyatra dwitiya ka mamapara (In this existence I am alone present, except me noneelse). He is also the proverbial Patitapabana (Redeemer of the fallen). He is the Hiranyagarbha and this word has relevant and interesting meaning. Hiranya means gold, golden emanation. Hiranyagarbha means “He within whom all radiations are contained “Sun, moon, stars and all objects are contained in Him. Jajur Veda says, “Vishwam jyotijachha” (14/14) meaning the universe is shining from your emanations only. Jagannath cult is deep rooted, mysterious and esoteric. Yogis understand a little and the wise pray to know more. Many aspects of Jagannatha Mahaprabhu still remains unattended and this is only a humble effort to present an infinitesimally small aspect of this ancient people-based tradition . Whatever little we know about Him only implies the vast unknown that remains.

N.B.: Number shown in bracket are linked with the glossary of words provided below :

Table-A

- 05.00 AM : Door opens . Arati (offering of lamps)
- 06.00 AM : Mailamalaagi (robes worn previous night is changed)
- 06.30 AM : Abakasha (morning purificatory rites of mundane activities like washing face, brushing teeth,



waterings, tongue scrappings, mirroring, bathing with perfumed water with camphor, curd, sandal paste etc.)

06.45 AM : Mailamalaagi (robe dressing of deities)

07.00 AM : Sahaanamelaa (Deities available for audience for public at large)

09.50 AM : Gopala-ballabha-bhoga (breakfast). Khai (puffed rice), cocoanut sweets, curd, butter etc .served on three different brass plates (Thalis)

08.00 AM : Besalaagi

10.00 AM : Sakala - dhupa or Rajabhoga. Offerings are made on Ratna-singhasana (the throne on which deities are seated. Secret worship is performed.

11.00 AM : Deities are again dressed up for giving Darshan to public at large

01.00 PM : Madhyaahna - dhupa (afternoon lunch) followed by nap

06.00 PM : Deities are awaken & arati (offering of lamps) made

08.00 PM : Sandhya-dhup (evening secret worship & offerings)

09.30 PM : Saahaanamela

10.00 PM : Change of robes

10.30 PM :Badasinghaara-Vesha (dress up for the night). Nocturnal secret worship by Tantriks in panchamakaara (five kinds of ma) upacharas etc.

11.45 PM : Deities retire and doors are closed.

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Glossary of words :

01. Sevak : He who serves. Gajapati king is the principal Sevak of the deities.
02. Ashtadhatu : Eight metals including gold, silver, copper, prescribed for making auspicious forms, structures, containers for Hindu rituals etc.
03. Vastra shringar : Dressing.
04. Prasada : Food offered to the deities of Hindu pantheon.
05. Mahaprasada : Means the grand divine food. Food stuff, after it is offered to Lord Jagannath.
06. Nimba pradhan metesham pratima nam binirmitow.
07. Amabashya mithuna sankranti.
08. Daru. It means a log of wood.
09. Joda-ashadha is a long period of rainy season as per Hindu calendar.
10. Shabaras are the relatives of the deity. They only stay informally. No rituals, no routines.
11. Adhia. It means continuous fasting and prostration before a deity seeking spiritual guidance, instructions etc.
12. Homa is fire worship (including sacrifice of cereals, forest products, animal products etc. as prescribed).
13. Uttara-dwara : The northern gate of the temple. The temple has four gates facing east, west, north & south;each having a history and a significance.
14. Devasnana Purnima : Bathing ceremony of the deities, held annually.
15. Koili Baikuntha : An area inside the temple where secret rituals like carving deities, discarding old deities etc. are executed.
16. Ashadha Chaturthy: A specific date in Hindu calendar which is in June.
17. Ashadha: means rainy month.
18. Garbhagriha is the womb-house.
19. Raths are chariots but each has prescribed bird's eye-view structure.

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Puri :A Study of Early Trade and Pilgrim Routes

Dr. Sunil Kumar Patnaik

Since the dawn of the civilization, Indians have shown great interest in trade. The morphological features of the sub-continent have contributed to the development of maritime activity. The geographical location of Indian Peninsula projecting into the Indian Ocean bowl is favourable for contacts with Africa on the west and with eastern Archipelago. During the early historical times (c.3rd B.C to c. 3rd A.D) the land routes extended from Taxila to Kaveripattinam in the south and Tamluk in the east up to Broach in the west. The major city centre of Kalinga (Ancient Odisha) of that time were Tosali, Kalingapatnam, Tamralipti, Pithunda which were all in the trade circuit. Here, an attempt is made to present the historical evidences that shows great heritage of Puri City being a pilgrim centre down in the lanes of history. The study of trade routes on the basis of archaeological and material evidences is the age old trend of Indian historical research apart from literature. The visible material evidences are considered as primary sources to study the history of a region or a place.

The important Indian urban trade centres in the early historical(c.3rd B.C to c.3rd A.D) period were Bharukaccha (Broach) on the west coast, Puskalavati on the north-west frontier, Sravasti, Champa (modern Bhagalpur), Pataliputra, Varanasi, Kausambi, Ayodhya,

Mathura, Vidisa and Ujjain in central India and Tamralipti, Tosali and Samapa, Kalinga Nagara on the east coast and Paithan or Pratisthna in Deccan region of India. These trade centres were well connected with the roads and communication network which has been described in *Dathavamsa*. Milestones were provided on the corner of the roads at intervals which helped to indicate the distance and direction which were evident from various excavated sites of India. This is proved in some of the early historical sites of India like Sisupalgarh, Kankia-Radhanagar, Manikapatna, Kausambhi, Taxila and some others.

The strategic geographical location of Odisha helped her in rising to great heights in respect of trade and communication from pre-Buddhist period. Odisha served as a bridge between the trans-oceanic and inland trade of India, causing migration of cultural traits along with trade and commerce. The entire strip of land running along the coast of Bay of Bengal and bounded on the north by river Kapisa or Kansai and on the south by the river Godavari was known in ancient times as Kalinga Desa and constituted one of the prosperous kingdoms of India. The *Astadhyayi* of Panini (c.5th B.C) mentions Kalinga as an important Janapada. So great was the fame of Kalinga as a maritime power in ancient times that Kalidas in his *Raghuvamsa* referred to



the king of Kalinga as the lord of the sea “*Mohodadhipati*”.

There are a number of literary references available regarding overseas trade route and commerce, so also inscriptions and excavated sites throw much light on the ancient trade routes. The literary evidence are found from *Arya Manjushrimulakalpa* Buddhist *Jatakas*, *Samantaprasadika*, *Uttaradhyanasutra*, *Brahmand Purana*, *Arthashastra*, *Madalapanji*, *Yuktikalpataru*, *Brihatsamhita*, *Dasakumaracharita*, *Sambapurana*, *Pavanaduta Kavya*, *Sunyasamhita*, etc. Puri or Sri Kshetra or Purusottama Kshetra or Jagannatha Dham being on the coast and a religious centre emerged as a city centre towards 7th-8th century A.D. with the establishment of Dhaam by Sankaracharya, of course, there was a settlement since the dawn of civilization which awaits the spade of archaeologists.

In the second quarter of the 7th century A.D. Yuan Chwang, the Chinese pilgrim was travelling widely in India, and he also came to Odisha (Kalinga, Utkala, Kangoda), called Wu-Tu in the text. He says in his travels, near the shore of the Ocean in the south-east of this country was the city Che-li-ta-lo, about 20 li in circuit, which was a thoroughfare and resting place for sea-going traders and strangers from distant lands. This place has been restored to its Sanskrit name Charitra and some scholars have identified it with Citrotpola and some others with Charitrpura or Puri. It is interesting to note that in 7th century A.D. the Chinese pilgrim Itsing mentioned a place called Srikshetra in Burma which is generally identified by Jayanasa with Prome region of Burma. Sumatra inscription of king Jayanasa (7th century) reveals that his royal park was named as Srikshetra. Srikshetra stands for Sri Purusottama had spread as far as South East Asia,

there by establishing a close communication contact.

The Archaeological excavation at Manikapatna, about 45 kms towards south of Puri provides a running chronology of historical habitation being a port or trade centre from 1st century A.D. to 18th century A.D. which serves as benchmark to study the settlement pattern and trade route of Puri. Abul Fazal described Manikapatna as a sea port where taxes were collected. There was a toll gate named Samudrakara Bandha' on the bank of Chilika where taxes were collected from the sea traders. The site of Manikapatna contains a series of mounds distinctly visible on the surface. On the top of the highest mound, there is Bhabakundaleswar temple of 13th century A.D. To the east of this temple is another important monument i.e., a Muslim tomb datable to 1885 A.D. The reference of Manikapatna first appears in the legend of Kanchi-Kaveri expedition of the Gajapati King Purusottama Deva of 15th century A.D. The limited excavation revealed (1989-90, 1992-93) a cultural deposit of two periods. The period I has revealed two Celts probably of Neolithic period along with pot-sherds. The period I is dated by the excavator from 2nd century B.C. to 5-6th century A.D., and with the end of period I there is a hiatus.

The deposit of period II can be dated from 9th century A.D. to the early part of 19th century A.D. In the lowest strata of period II, fragments of good quality jade green colour Chinese celadon made their appearance. In the habitation area no complete structures are encountered.

The most spectacular findings from Manikapatna are ceramics of various types including both indigenous and foreign fabrics. This is probably the only site in the entire east-coast



of India from where so many varieties of imported wares have been found. Some of these wares are rouletteware, knobbedware, egg-white glazed and glazed chocolate, Arabic ware, keoline ware, Chinese celadon, Chinese porcelain, black, grey, and black and red ware, a sherd with Khorosti script and a Puri-Kushana coin. Other noteworthy objects from the site are a Ceylonese coin with legend Srimad Sahassamala, two triangular copper coins of Shah Alam, two east India copper coins, a British Medal, Mughal coins, a Chinese coin, harpoon, spearhead, fish-hooks, game pieces, iron beads, terracotta beads of arceanut shape, terracotta figurines, two stone shels, a four armed Vishnu image of chlorite, grinder and pestle, a male torso made of khondalite, female miniature head, cart wheels, a large number of bangles of conch shell, terracotta lamps etc. Manikpatna is the only site along the sea coast of India from where varieties of ceramics including Chinese Celadonware have been reported. The presence of pottery, artifacts and coins indicates the impact of early sea trade between Odisha and the Mediterranean world. Findings of Roulettes ware, shreds with Khorosti scripts, semi contact between Odisha , Bengal, Assam and Tamilnadu dates back to early historic period. Manikpatna played a vital role in the internal trade of the east coast of India. It was a strong port and ruled by a Jagirdar up to early part of 19th century. During the Mughal and Maratha period, it was a flourishing port town as we get inscriptional evidence from the tomb. The formation of the sand bars and sedimentation in the Lake caused the decline of Manikapatna port. So also remains of archaeological importance has brought to limelight recently at Bardhyakuda, Podagarh, Jhatipadara and around Chilika which are datable to the early historical period to medieval period.

So also the excavation at Khalkatapatna near Konark focuses on the trade activities during Ganga period. This Khalakatapatana was one of the major ports of Odisha which flourished during 11th century A.D. The evidence found from excavation (1987, ASI) are a brick jetty floor, Chinese Celadonware, Chinese porcelain, with blue floral design, egg-white glazedware and chocolateware, stamped pottery with geometrical design. Besides, Chinese coins are also found from this site. A fragment of Chinese copper coins which is dated to 14th century A.D, and the circular copper coin had a square perforation at the centre having a legend in Chinese character have been found. All these materials suggest that there was a strong trade relation between China and India and point to great marine trade in east-coast.

There are many places in Puri district which bear the tradition of maritime trade. Some of the places like Banikapatna, Balipatna, Bandari (Astarang Block), Vandareswara (Near Charchika), Boitabhangatutha of Vishnupur near Nimapada very close to river Kushabhadra, Bedapurapatna in Gop block and near Kakatpur in Prachi Valley and several places like Boyitakuda and a place called Jahaja-Padiya or ship field bear testimony of sea trade. Archaeological remains are visible in these places of Puri district which were the outlets for trade and commerce and served as trade routes in the historical periods.

The construction of huge temples such as Sri Jagannath temple at Puri and Sun Temple at Konarak and display of sculpture panels on double mast boats, pilgrims Martand Bhairava and establishment of several shrines of Mangala, Ramachandi, Baliharchandi, Kalijai (goddess) etc, provide much evidence on continuity of sea trade on the coast.



Madalapanji- the temple chronicle of events of Sri Jagannath, records the historical events like Rakta Vahu's capture of Kalinga and Puri coming by sea- voyage. It appears that people from other countries like Greece, Rome, China, Persia etc, had come to Kalinga/Utkala for trade. These people have been termed as Yavana. The Madala Panji indicates the existence of foreigners in Kalinga and confirms that Kalinga's contact with foreign countries. This is also known from the *Brahmanda Purana*, particularly Chilika as a trade route. The discovery of Kushana coins at Gurubai (near Jhanikuda) on the strip of land between the Chilika lake and the sea suggests a trade route in the area. Later period during mid 16th century the idols of Jagannatha, Balabhadra and Subhadra of Puri were taken to this place and kept in hide from the Muslim attacks. So also places like Nairi, Chakanasi (near Brahmapur Island) where idols of Puri Temple were kept and taken to Banapur and Marda in Ganjam district. So also the remnants of Vishnu temple at Satapada (near Shelter Centre) and Siva and Vishnu temple at Nairi, Vaisnavite temple at Palur etc. suggest a strong communication network starting from Puri to southern part of Odisha through Chilika during 14th -15th century A.D. Vasudeva Somayaji the author of *Gangavansanucharitam* has described that he came to Puri from Burwa, a port in Ganjam by a boat and returned on the land route to Khallikote after crossing the Chilika lake in a boat in the year 1762 A.D.

During early medieval period the surplus agrarian and industrial products led to the growth of trade and commerce, which has continued from the early times. The rural trade was mainly carried out by the *hattas* (weekly markets). The epigraphic evidences of the Bhaumas, Ganga and Gajapati periods often refer *hattas* as the nuclei of rural trade. The ruling monarchs established

these *hattas* by bringing the undertaking of public utility. The Puri copperplate inscription of Bhanudeva II, dated 1312 A.D. and Alipur plates of Narasinghdeva II, dated 1294 A.D. refers to a number of *hattas* of medieval Odisha. These village markets have acted as a direct link among cultivators, craftsmen and artisans which have served the need of the village people.

There existed a number of inter-state and intra-state trade routes in medieval Odisha. The expedition of Rajendra Chola (11th century A.D.) to Dandabhukti through Odisha suggests the existence of inter-state roads connecting the Baster region of Madhya Bharat. Srikshetra or Purusottam Kshetra (Puri) was a major pilgrimage centre in India at least from Ganga period and was connected with different regions by roads. The migration of Brahmanas to Odisha also proves the existence of inter-state routes. The great Vaisnava saint Sri Chaitanya came to Puri from Navadvipa by following a route. A Ganga grant dated c. 909 A.D. refers to a route named Dharmaraja Kalinga-Marga which connected Odisha with South India. So also there are several pilgrim routes connected to Puri along with coast to south India and central and western India along with Mahanadi river popularly called Jagannath-sadak. The routes are refried by many pilgrims and saints. There still exists some archaeological remains along Palur coast and Boud Sonepur on the bank of Mahanadi.

The Van Den Brokes map was prepared in 1960 A.D. In this map places like Jagannath, Cuttack Bhadrak, Baleswar, Remuna, Narasinghapur, Pipili, Jaleswar and Dantan are shown on a high way. Towards the end of 19th century and early part of 20th century we get a Portuguese currency note chat printed the picture of the Jagannath. On obverse of the Rupia paper currency the name of the bank Banco National



Ultramarino and Nova Goa have been printed in bold upper character. On the reverse of the currency the name of the Banco National Ultra Marino in bold upper character at the top three Jaganntha temple of Puri at the centre and uma Rupia in bold character have been printed at the below of the currency. The main temple (*vimana*) and the *Jagamohan* have been shown clearly. The compound wall, the steps leading to the temple and two rooms at the main entrance of the temple are also clearly shown. The Bazaar outside of the temple selling Prasad in clay pots is also depicted on the right side. It is also clear from the currency that the Jagannath temple was depicted on currency before transplantation of Arunastambha which was brought from Konarak. The Portuguese had trade centres in Odisha Coast. The Jagannath temple of Puri and the Sun Temple at Konarak were known to the Europeans as White Pagoda and Black Pagoda and were served as the landmarks during navigation.

The existing temple of Lord Jagannath was known to international sailing community as an important landmark while moving in the Bay of Bengal. Sailing directions and ship logs mention about the exact location of the temple from distant sea (20 kms from shore) Kempthorn (1679 A.D) has given the exact course of coastal navigation in folio 136-68 which mention that "from Maneclapatam to Jauggernaut course is East-North East and distance is 10 miles." It could be safely concluded that most likely, Puri was used as a Port from Arab period (10th Century A.D) and later on Portuguese along with other Europeans had full knowledge about local shipping at Puri. Probably for this reason, Kempthorn in his international direction of sailing have mentioned Jauggernaut. There are several references found in the shiplog of Capt. Talbot (1680 A.D), Capt Hide (1681 A.D). Capt. Lake (1683). All these

Captains mostly were coming from on their way from or to London mention about the landmark to approach Odisha coast was Mahendragiri in south and next important was Jaggeraut. Maneclapatam was also an important land mark. However, some of these records are kept in British Museum London which need more research to know more about the maritime past of Odisha in general and Puri in particular.

The state of internal routes was well described by Mr. Toynbee in his sketch of *History of Odisha*, when we took the province in 1803, there was not a road, in the modern sense of the word, in existence. What were then called roads were mere fair-weather cart-track without bridges and proper ferry arrangements for crossing the numerous water-course which they intercepted; they passed, however, for the most part over high ridges of uncultivated land, and were thus more practicable than they would be at present day, when cultivation has been so enormously extended. The traffic from south to Cuttack passed along the eastern shore of the Chilika lake, between it and the sea, to Puri and thence followed exactly the line of the present great Jagannath road. It now all passes through Khurda along Ganjam road, the old route being abandoned to Nuliya fisherman and antelope. The ruins of the old rest houses for pilgrims (It found in Berhampura island which was explored in the year 2006)- the only visible record of its existence.

Another line from Puri passed through Khurda and the Barmula pass in to central provinces via Sambalpur. Proceeding northwards the line from Puri passed through Cuttack, Padampur, Arakpur, and Brahmabarda to Jajpur and thence to Bhadrak through Dhamnagar. Thence lines followed as nearly as possible that of present road. It was not, however, until 1804-05 that this line was adopted. The former route



was through Nilgiri and Mayurbhanj. It passed in many places through dense jungle infested by tigers and other wild animals and to keep down these, the Moghuls and Maratha used to give grants of land rent free to individuals on condition of their reclaiming the grant.

However, pilgrim business was the main trade of Puri since the historical days, hence the pilgrim route is considered to be the main trade route. W.W. Hunter, in early twentieth century writes that “the great spiritual army marched its hundreds sometimes its thousands of miles along burning roads, across unabridged rivers and through pestilent regions of jungles and swamps. Those who kept to the road had spent their strength long before the holy city (Puri) was reached. The sturdy women of Hindustan braved it out and sang songs till they dropped; but the weaker females of Bengal limped piteously along with bleeding feet in silence, broken only by deep sighs and an occasional sob. Many a sickly girl died upon the road ; and by the time they reached Puri, the whole party and their feet bound up in rags, plastered with dirt and blood.” At that time Bengal pilgrims had to tramp all the way from Ulberia to Puri on Jagannath Trunk Road, only the wealthier classes travel in bullock carts or palanquins, while pilgrims from the south used to come by road along the strip of land between Chilika Lake and the Bay or in few cases by boats across the Chilika Lake in the year 1810. Raja Sukhamaya Ray of Bengal had taken leading step for construction of the Jagannath Road which facilitated pilgrims to come easily. So also in 1901 railway line was opened to Puri. So also the single road leading to Puri was declared as National Highway in the year 2002 and the Road network was strengthened and by now keeping eye on the Navakalevar 2015 the NH-203 is being widened and multiple option is wide opened to control the crowd and for visitor management.

Thus, Puri being on the Bay of Bengal was well connected with all over India and south-East-Asia since historical days. The sea ports like Manikapatna, Gourangapatna, Khalkatapatna and others were very active during different periods of history as we have discussed. So also the internal communication pattern through land route made this city as cultural capital of India. Due to a strong communication network, it was possible for the kings and emperors to build such gigantic temple structure. It is an established fact in Indian History that all the famous religious and sacred sites had strong trade and commerce background. It can very well be attested from the western Indian cave sites as well as Indian temple sites like Mahabalipuram, Kanchi, Kaveripattnam, Simanchalam, Konarak, Puri, Dilwara etc.

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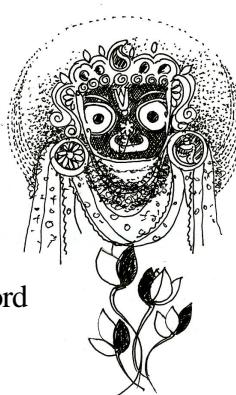
Offering

Shyam Prakash Senapati

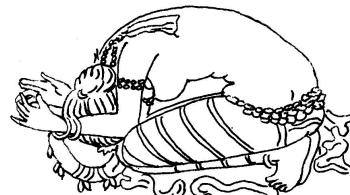
Oh Lord !
You are nothing
And everything
You are sound
And resound.

Cause and creator of the
Sea, Sky and the Earth
You cover and uncover the word
And the technical word.

In each and every moment
I take re-birth that is
Your shadow and compassion.



Oh, Wooden-God, Janardan !
Give a new sacred text
In exchange, I will
Offer you
My Poet-heart.



Shyam Prakash Senapati, Editor, Abhinandanika,
Senapati Bhawan, Grand Road, Puri-752001.



Bhairabi - Jagannatha Kshetra

Dr. Prafulla Chandra Mohanty

Odisha is the land of spiritual and cultural monuments. The biggest religious cultural centre inside the state is Puri and it is famous for the shrine of Lord Jagannath. Jagannath Dham is one of the four important Dhams (centres) of India situated at the eastern part of our country. Jagannath Dham of Puri termed as Sankha Kshetra situated in a triangular land scape looking like a coanch. It is also the Shreekshetra which signifies the place of Lakshmi, the spouse of Lord Jagannath the Lord of the Universe, Who is well known as the Goddess of wealth. In Odisha there are other kshetras (centres) like Arka Kshetra (place of Sun), at Konark, Tulsi Kshetra at Kendrapara (Baldevjew temple), Sabar Shreekshetra of tribals at Koraput, Saran Srikshtera at Marada (Ganjam), Saila Shreekshetra at Anugul and Durga-Madhaba or Bhairabi-Jagannath Kshetra at Mantridi of South Odisha. In Bhagawat Geeta, Lord Srikrishna narrates about the kshetra & khetrangya where kshetra is the place where God of the Universe resides. Kshetra without Kshetrangya (God) is

meaningless. With the above background the article gives a brief description of ancient Bhairabi Kshetra presently developed as Durga-Madhaba Kshetra situated in the sacred land of Mantridi area in Ganjam district of South Odisha. Maa Sri Siddha Bhairabi Kshetra was situated at a 18 kms distance towards south east corner of Berhampur city on the side of N.H.-5. The

**MAA SIDDHA BHAIKABI TEMPLE
MANTRIDI, GANJAM, BERHAMPUR
ODISHA**



Shaktipeeth was famous for the cult of Bhairab which was believed to be present since 400 B.C.

The Durga Madhab kshetra has two important deities. One is the Goddess Bhairabi (the fifth incarnation of Durga), and the second



one is the Jagannath (the Lord of the Universe). In Vaishnavism, the earlier to Daru worship was the worshipping of idol made out of stone. ‘The Madhaba’ is a tribal deity. In each and every Shakti Peetha a Vaishnava Bhairab Kshetra will be there. Accordingly a Jagannath Temple was developed since 1982, as per the verse goes like ‘Vimala Bhairabi’ Yatra Jagannathstu Bhairab’. The sacred shrine is situated at an ancient port town and trading centre Mantridi. The natural beauty of the location is very heart-touching and attractive. The Kalinga Sagar, i.e. the bay of Bengal is only at a distance of three kilometers to the east. The roaring sound of the sea in the night can create an eternal music of life in the ears of living being. The south is filled with tribal and forests of palm, mango, cashew, kewada and of many other flowering plants. The unique presence of the Bahuda river, its sacred sands, soil turns the visitor emotional. In the west a skyhigh green Kerandi Mala mountains looks like pyramid and stands like a fence linked to the Eastern ghat legendary mountains of Mahendragiri. Brahmapur city, the place of Brahma, the port Gopalpur, Mansurkota, Golabandha the military cantonment, Bhanja Bihar, the campus of Brahmapur University is at a distance of five to ten kms towards the north. The very important river shrine Rushikulya and the largest lake of Asia, Chilka is the eternal beauty, queen of the land, is singing the songs with migrating Siberian birds as a rare feature of the site. The presence of the natural sceneries increases thousand times the beauty of this shrine of Durga Madhaba or Bhairabi-Jagannath Kshetra. Spiritually, Mantridi is the place of Shaiva, Shakta, Vaisnava and Bouddha religion. Utareswar, Neelakantheswara, Kasiviswanatha, Enkenswara and Pataleswara are the Saiva temples of the area. Similarly

Raghunatha, Balaji, Radhakanta Mathas are witnessing the Vaishnab Kshetra. Mantridi is a place which connects South to North and East to West of India in religion and culture. Now in South Odisha the Bhairabi Peetha is an important Shakti Peetha also termed as ‘Ekpada Bhairavi Kshetra’ of Odisha.

As per the mythological studies, it is known that before the incarnation of Jagannath, the cult of Madhaba was prevailing there. In the deep forest the Supreme was worshipped by a Sabar – Tribal named Viswavasu. The diety was in a cave most possibly at Mohendragiri area and worshipped in the name of Neela Madhaba – the blue coloured idol. Later the diety was stolen by Vidyapati in the knowledge of Viswabasu’s daughter out of love. On the desire of Bhairabi a proposal of erecting a Jagganath temple was made in 1982. The work was carried on without any obstacle in the backyard in the vicinity of Maa Bhairabi Temple after cutting the age old Kalpa Bata which was there from the time immemorial. The Bata Briksha (Peepal Tree) was believed to be the incarnation of Lord Bhairaba – Vishnu in the premises of Maa Bhairabi. A Viswa Shanti Maha Yangya – was conducted since eleven days from 4th to 14th April 1982 and Purnahuti was performed by the Gajapati King of Puri Sri Sri Dibyasingha Dev. Devotees in lakhs came and got Darshan of Bhairabi and visited the site for newly constructed Jagannath Temple. It is not only said but witnessed also by the gathering that a Cobra snake was the master of the whole Yangya and managing the total show for eleven days. People had the belief that Bhairabi Maa incarnated as a Snake Cobra for successful completion of the sacred fire (Yangya) which is for a motto of betterment of the total Universe. It is decided then and there to start the work of constructing a



Jagannath Temple as the Peetha Rakshaka (Protector) of the Kshetra.

Temple Construction : The villagers of vicinity Bayali, Mantridi, Haradanga etc had given free services (Kara Seva) day and night for the construction of Jagannath Temple. The progress was in a sound process and the Temple was ready for 'Ratnamuda'. The Ratnamuda was done with lot of enthusiasm and devotion. Lakhs of devotees came and participated. Ratnamuda means the closing of the first roofed chamber of the Temple with all grains, gold, silver, copper coins and plates which can be utilised for renovation and reconstruction of the temple in the future if required. The upper portion of the Temple was speedily constructed and the structure was ready for placement of Parswa Devatas and different godly images were put on the outer skirt of the temple. The Neelachakra was of eighty four Kilograms weight made up out of Astadhatus (eight metals of fifty per cent of Iron and steel, twenty five per cent of Copper, Gold, Silver, Dusta, Ranga, Lead, Mercury) costing nearly a crore rupees was set along with Aanlashree. The construction of the temple was finished. The temple has four parts like Rekha, Gama, Bhadra and Mohan as described in *silpa bastu sastras*. Now, it was the time to go for Daru Yatra. Daru Yatra means to search for a Neem Tree out of which the new deities are to be made for worshipping. On receiving the Agyanmala of Maa Bhairabi, a team of devotees went towards North direction after crossing the pious river Rushikulya in search of Daru. Similar formalities and rituals of Daru Yatra of Puri also observed after getting the permission and Agyanmala of Kakatpur Mangala situated near the bank of the historic river 'Prachi'. Here the difference is the bank of Rushikulya instead of Prachi. Here the devotees

of Durga Madhaba Kshetra went in search of Daru by the orders of Bhairabi instead of Mangala. Mangala is said to be the sea Goddess related with Taapoi, Sudasha Brata, Khudurukuni Osha. Similar to this Maa Bhairabi is the Thakurani – Mangala worshipped by the only daughter of Dhaneswar Sadhaba. The area around Mantridi is also a centre to start the sea voyage by the then Sadhabas who are now also the inhabitant of the area in the name of Sadhabas and Sadhabanis. Researchers said the titles are changed a bit in pronouncing Sahus and Sahanis. The team in search of Daru went in a procession with Aum-marked orange coloured flags, *agyanmala* (phool, sindur), hundred and eight Sankirtan groups towards east and reached in a dense forest near Jarad village. A gigantic neem tree was earmarked for Daru in obedience with all the rituals and godly symbols in it. Vast tree was cut by golden and silver axes after offering Puja, Homa, Yagyans. The Daru was cut into four pieces for Chaturddha Murti – The Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarsan. A car (Ratha) was decorated for transporting Daru from Jarada to Bhairabi Peetha. The procession of Daru Yatra was accomplished with twenty one camps and stoppages throughout the way on walk. The scenery carries a vision of ancient Kanchi Abhiyan headed by Jagannath and Balabhadra in the 15th Century. The crowd on both the sides of the road ready with Dhoop, Deepa & Naibedya as offerings and as such welcomed the sacred Daru Brahma with full devotion uttering Hariboles and Hulahulis. This created a heavenly environment in receiving the Daru Brahma. The Daru Yatra (Procession) was ended at Bharabi Peetha. An Anna Yagan was arranged for the devotees. A carpenter (Viswakarma) was arranged and the wooden immages of Lord



Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarsan were made in the stipulated time as per the schedule. The day of car festival was nearing, the Gods were painted with usual colour. Prior to Rath Yatra Nava Youvana Darshan was held. Lakhs and Lakhs of people came to attend the Rath Yatra. The Gods were given Prana Pratistha along with other hundred six surrounding deities in a Maha Yagan conducted in the Maha Bisuva of April 2000 era on chanting *slokas* and *Veda mantras* by a group of priests. Now the Bhairabi Peetha was converted to Bhairabi-Jagannath Peetha or Durga Madhaba Kshetra and looked like a mini Indian religious centre carrying the dietes of all over undivided ancient India. The Pran Pratishta ceremony was again completed by the King Gajapati Divya Singha Deva of Puri- which was again of eleven days. From that day onwards, the Bhairabi-Jagannath Kshetra observes its Pujas, rituals and festive occassions – throughout the year. Now the Peetha is looking very beautiful with its all hundred eight temple shrines and the rose, tulasi, other flower gardens etc. Pilgrims all over India and abroad are approaching the Peetha every day for getting the blessings. A devotee wanted to see the Kshetra will first go to the Kalanki- Jaya Bijaya and sixty four Yogini Dwara then entered to hundred eight temple premises placed in a rectangular design. The Jagannath temple is situated along with Mukhasala and Jagamohan Hundred six deities are present in the sorrounding. After making a Darshan the devotee is to enter the ancient Bhairabi temple and then to Sankirtan Mandal chanting mahamantra.

Ratha Yatra – Three decent ornamental differently coloured chariots are prepared for conducting car festival. The blue painted chariot for Jagannath, white coloured chariot is for

Balabhadra, the yellow painted car is for Subhadra and Sudarsan is kept in the Chariot with Jagannath. The Gods are taken to Mausima Ghara which is about one forth of a kilometer towards the east near the village Bayali for Ratha Yatra – since 2000. At the begining the deities were taken to a temporary tin roofed shed Bahuda Ghara. But since 2012 a decent Mausima temple was constructed, Pratistha Yangyan was performed and then these three wooden cars are taken to the newly constructed Mausima Temple. The Shree Gundicha Yatra was very well witnessed by thousands of devotees mostly from North Andhra and of South Odisha. The beautiful scenery of car festival is the rolling of three nicely decorated chariots one after another on the historic bank of Nua Bandha – filled with lotus flower really eye catching. Sarathis the drivers along with the Parswa Devatas are afixed and the Chariots are ready to drive the heavenly Rath Yatra. The wheels of three wooden cars roled to the Gundicha Mandir with Hariboles, Hulahulis, Sankirtans, with Sankha and Kahali *nadas* (blowing). The roaring sound of the devotees dragging the chariots with much enthusiasm crosses the sky. The deities are carried to the chariots (Pahandi Bije) by Sahu Brahmins Pandas. The Pandas are uniformly dressed with Pattas, the famous Berhampuri Silk.

The Kshetra is now the combination of Maa Adya Shakti and Madhaba, the Jagannath. During the year all festivals of Durga and Vishnu are conducted. In the month of Jestha, a Seetal Sasthi Yatra, the Siba Bibah, the marriage ceremony is usually observed taking the godly procession to the nearest three basic villages like Bayali, Mantridi and Haradanga. The Vishuba Sankranti, Deva Snan Purnima, Nava Youvana Darshan, Netra Utsav, Gundicha and Bahuda



Yatra, Navaratra Puja and Dussehra along with the Ratha Yatra was carried on in this place with speciality. Lakhs and thousands of visitor - devotees from inside the country and abroad are coming to this famous Kshetra named as Durga-Madhaba or Bhairabi-Jagannath Kshetra.

A museum carrying the history and the legendary facts of the area is highly needed. An information centre, guide service and a frequent bus and rail services are needed to explore this Tirtha alongwith other nearer Peethas like Lord Ganesh Temple of Panchama, Bahuda Muhan and Pari-Sunapur, Balakumari, Kalua, Taratarini, Narayani, Chilka, Dhabaleswar, Gopalpur and

many other eye catching tourist spots. Tourist centres, accomodation facilities for the visitors of interest should be constructed. Sufficient publicity of these tourist spots should be given regarding the site, transporting and accomodation facilities to the devotees all over the country. The city bus services of Berhampur may be extended to these spots regularly which will render a great service to the visitors.

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Journey into Eternity

Bhagaban Jayasingh

No one is like me alone --
Waiting to have a
drop of grace
trickling out of a mere touch
of your screeching carts.

Several times have I
pulled you among
the clouds and smokes
through the tear-clad devotion
of milling crowds.

I have no regrets
that your wheels they glide along
the grand avenue
are dispassionate to
all my desires
flashing across my dreams.



Now the dark night has set in,
the praying crowd have disappeared
into the sky of their melting hopes
I do not know
when you will begin your
journey back into
the eternity of my being.

Bhagaban Jayasingh, near Central School, Puri.



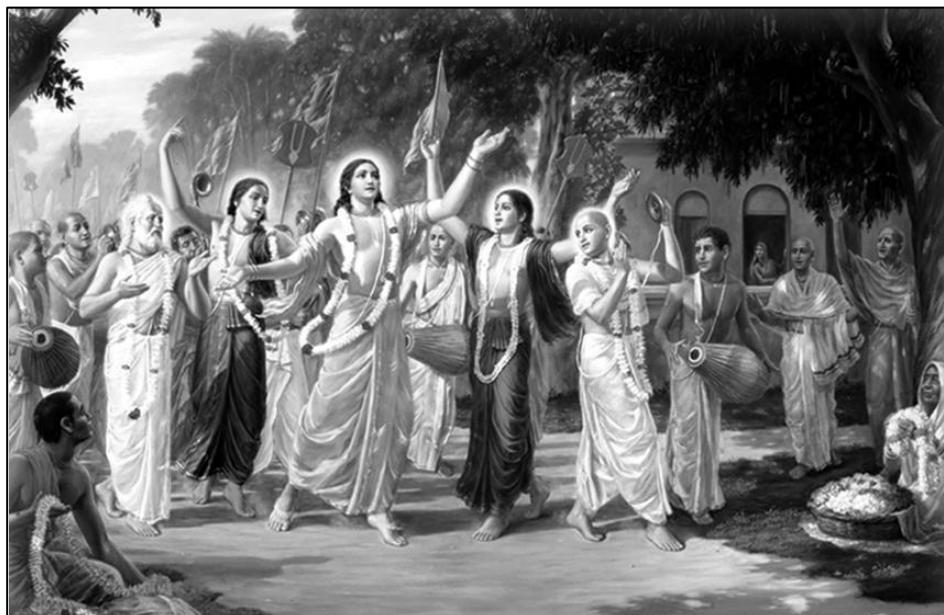
Chaitanya's Panchasakha and Lord Jagannath

Dr. Dina Krishna Joshi

Among the various great souls, landed in the holy place Odisha previously known as Kalinga, the most prominent are the Panchasakha (Five Friends) who have deeply influenced both the Odia Spiritualism and the Literature. The land is witness to most of the important Hindu traditions and spiritual movements. Five poets emerged towards the 16th century: Balaram Das, Jagannath Das, Achyutananda Das, Ananta Das and Jasobanta Das. Although their dates of activity span one hundred years, they are collectively known as "Panchasakhas", since they adhered to the same school of thought, Utkaliya Vaishnavism. These five friends lived in between 1450 to 1550 AD and enriched the spiritualism in a way that normal man can also understand and benefit out of that.

'Pancha' means five and 'Sakhaa' means friends-The great spiritual leader and Naamayogi

Avataar Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has referred to these five friends as Panchasakha and stated that the Panchasakha are like Pancha Atma, i.e., five souls (Atma- Tattva) and are in no way lesser



than Avatars of Vishnu. Shri Chaitanya was the first to establish the Bhaaba-Mishrita Naama Marga (the path of chanting the holy name with proper feelings and faith); before him this method was not so popular or well-known even if the path is partly described in the ancient Vedas. He first introduced this method for all the simple-minded people and made many realize that God-



realization can also be achieved by simpler method of pure devotion without undergoing difficult method of austerities. It is he who first disclosed the importance of the Mahaa Mantra-Hare Krisna Hare Krisna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare!

Legends behind the origin of Panchasakha

There is an interesting belief about the origin of Panchasakha which relates them to the Mahabharata in the Dwapara-Yuga, and is also stated in Shunya Samhita written by Mahapurusha Achyutananda. Here, Mahapurusha describes, Panchasakhaa literally meaning ‘five mates or friends’. Towards the end of Mahabharat era when Lord Krishna was leaving the mortal body, Nilakantheswara Mahadeva appeared and had a conversation with Lord Krishna. He revealed that the Lord’s companions Dama, Sudama, Srivatsa, Subala, and Subahu would reincarnate in the Kali-Yuga and will be known as Ananta, Achyutananda, Jagannatha, Balarama and Yasovanta, respectively. Thus, the believers of the Panchasakha consider that these five saints were the most intimate friends of Lord Krishna in Dwapara-Yuga, who came again in Kali-Yuga to serve Him. They are also instrumental to perform the crucial and much-awaited Yuga-Karma of destroying the sinners and saving the saints, according to the Sanatana-Hindu beliefs.

Satyabadi Panchasakha

A band of selfless young men namely Pandit Gopabandhu Das, Acharya Harihar Das, Pandit Nilakantha Das, Krupasindhu Mishra and Godavarish Mishra who distinguished themselves in later life as scholars and national leaders are popularly known as Satyabadi’s Panchasakha. The Panchasakha or five comrades contributed their best for the cause of national aspirations.

They were equally dedicated to the blend of educational as well as political uplift of Odisha.

Panchasakha and Buddhism

The theory of the universe has ever been the first problem in every religion. Like the Puranas and Tantric texts, the Panchasakha literature also abounds with it. The Panchasakha starts with the eternal question - who was there when this entire phenomenal universe was not ? The problem of the Prime Mover is still beyond our reach and can only be explained negatively- He is not this, not this - ‘neti neti’. The Prajnaparamita Hridayagarbha, a later Buddhist scripture describes Sunyata as ‘neti neti’. Therefore, it seems that there are a lot of similarities between the Panchasakha ideology of Sunyata and that of the Buddhists.

Panchasakha and Lord Jagannath

Achyutananda was born in a village by the name ‘Tilakana’, where two distributaries of the Mahanadi, Luna (Labana Dhara) and Chitrotpala bifurcated, in Cuttack district of Odisha, during the twenty first *anka* of the Gajapati Purushottam Deva. This is thought to be somewhere between 1480 and 1505 by different scholars. His mother was Padmavati, and his father was Dinabandhu Khuntia, and his grandfather was Gopinath Mohanty, a scribe in the Jagannath temple at Puri. He was born after his mother prayed at the pillar in front of the Jagannath Temple, and his father had a dream that the divine bird Garuda brought him a child. In legend he is believed to be an incarnation of Garuda.

Jewelled by sacred Buddhist monuments to temples of Shakti (the supreme female power), Shiva (the supreme male power), and Jagannath Vishnu (Lord of the Universe), the state is unique



in itself. Most important spiritual rituals have been extensively practiced here by several seers - including Buddhist ceremonies, Devi Tantra (tanric rituals involving worship of Shakti), Shaiva Marg (the path followed by devotees of Shiva), and Vaishnava Marg (the path followed by the devotees of Vishnu). Hardly there is any seer who would not pay a visit to the Shri Jagannath temple once in his/her life.

Teachings of Panchasakha

Two important factors set the Panchasakhas apart from other Indian Hindu Saints. They were the first to take the Hindu Sanskrit texts into the reach of the common people, by translating them into the local language, Odia. This was first done by Sarala Dasa's translation of the Mahabharata in the mid-fifteenth century, followed by Balarama Dasa's Jagamohan Ramayana, Jagannath Dasa's Bhagabat Purana, and Acyutananda Dasa's Harivamsa. The second aspect is their form of Odia Vaisnavism, which sees God as the 'Shunya Purusha' and the nature of the soul as being able to merge into the Absolute.

Sri Chaitanya and Panchasakha

Utkaliya Vaisnavism also sometimes called Odia Vaisnavism developed into its present state, in the 15th century. According to the Panchasakhas, Lord Jagannath is the 'Purna-Brahma', and all the Avatars of Vishnu emanate from Him, and also enter into Him at the end. Jagannatha was the chief god of the devotional sect. The chief ideal of the Panchasakhas was that, as a Bhakta they would be faithful, humble, learned, selfless, active, benevolent and affectionate. The Panchasakhas were against the caste system, they considered all beings as one. They translated the Sanskrit Classics into local

language, Odia. Anyone could become a Vaisnava, even Muslims.

At the time of Shri Chaitanya, his followers who came from Nadia, called later as Gaudiya, were considering them greater or superior to the Utkaliya Vaisnavas and were disregarding them. So there was a cold war between them. Knowing this, Shri Chaitanya conferred the title of 'Atibadi' (the great) on Jagannatha Das to keep up the dignity of the Utkaliya Vaisnavas. But it brought no solution, and on the other had created conflict among them. The conflict of these two groups are evident in the Basana Charita Gita of Acyutananda, and even in modern day derogatory language of the Gaudiya towards the Utkaliya Vaisnavas.

Explaining to his disciples the attributes of a devotee, Shri Acyutananda Das said, "There are Bhaktas that go on chattering the name of the Lord, there are Bhaktas who will take food from any home. There are Bhaktas who perform occult acts and Bhaktas who make false offerings. There are wandering Bhaktas who carry flags to parade their devotion, and there are Bhaktas who are smeared all over there body. He who has attained the right understanding of the Divine is the real Bhakta, he is the best because he has an inward eye, sees God within him, and in every person."

Age of Panchasakha

The Panchasakhas are very much Vaishnavas by thought. In 1509, Chaitanya came to Odisha with his Vaishnava message of love. Before him, Jayadev had prepared the ground by heralding the cult of Vaishnavism through his Geetagovinda. Chaitanya's path of devotion was known as Raganuga Bhakti Marga, but the Panchasakhas differed from Chaitanyas and believed in Gyana Mishrita Bhakti Marga, which



has similarities with the Buddhist philosophy of Charya Literature.

As said earlier, the Panchasakha converted ancient Hindu texts into prose (of simple language) easily understandable by the people of Udra Desha (Odisha). Shri Achyutananda Das was the most prolific writer of the Panchasakhas and has written numerous books (called as Pothi's), believed not in one life but in many successive lives. He is known as the Mahapurusha, which means - a great man. Mahapurusha Achyutananda was a *shunya sadhak* and had acquired immense knowledge about almost every aspect, i.e. spiritualism, Ayurveda (Indian healing medical science that uses only natural resources and herbs), various other sciences, and social regulations.

Panchasakha ideology

a) Sunya Purusha

nahi tahara rupa varna, adarsha avarna ta chinha.
tahaku brahma boli kahi, sunya brahmhati se bolai.

It has no shape, no colour,
it is invisible and ideal, without a name
This Brahman is called Shunya Brahman.

The Panchasakhas believed in a concept of God as Sunya (emptiness, void, zero) called Shunya Purusha or Shunya Brahman. This Shunya signifies a transcendental principle that eludes the conceptual nexus applied to human thinking as described in the Upanishads. Achyutananda's culminating work is called the Shunya Samhita where he discusses this philosophy in depth.

sunyara akara viira sunyara vicara,
sunye thai dekha vira e sacaracara.

dekha e sacaracara sunyare prakasha,
sunyu ude hoichanti sunyare vilase.

Oh viral Look at the shunya
by placing yourself in shunya,
and meditate on mahashunya,
Shunya itself is the form,
Ground of all discriminating knowledge.

Look at the whole world from the pedestal of Shunya;
you will find everything manifested in the Shunya,
everything arises out of Shunya and
everything flourishes in the Shunya Brahman.

The philosophy is not the Shunya of the Buddhists, as it is not empty but full, sometimes even called the Purna Shunya (the full/complete void). The Panchasakhas project the deity Jagannath as the embodiment of the Shunya Purusha. Achyutananda uses a classical concept of Vaishnavism that uses both form, and formless aspects of God. This is seen in his statement from the Gurubhakti Gita:

dui je dinare paksi udikari jai,
dui je chaksure sehi samsare khelai.

ekaje na thile kana dui gale andha,
enukari nirguna saguna sehi bheda.

A bird can only fly with both wings. It can have a perfect vision with both the eyes. In the absence of one, it becomes one-eyed, and in the absence of both, it is totally blind. Thus like two eyes Nirguna (god perceived as formless) and Saguna (god perceived with form) are chained together.

b) Jnana-mishrita Bhakti-marga

The Panchasakhas are very much Vaishnavas by thought. Chaitanya's path of devotion was known as Raganuga Bhakti Marga (brought to Odisha in 1509), which says all you need is love (devotion) to get God. The Panchasakhas differed from Chaitanya's



philosophy, and believed in Jnana-mishrita Bhakti-marga, which states that one needs a combination of love (bhakti) and knowledge (Jnana) to reach God. With our knowledge if we show our pure love (bhakti), we can definitely get the *sunyatma* (GOD). The Panchasakhas therefore promoted a Vaishnavism that involved study of scriptures, yoga, rituals, and devotion.

c) Pinda-Brahmada Tattva

The concept of the Pinda-Brahmada is that the body (pinda) is a replica of the Universe (Brahmada), or microcosm is a reflection of the macrocosm. Much of the yogic teachings of Acyutananda are based on this core concept. His teachings are filled with references to outer locations existing as energies in the body.

d) Sabda Brahman

The concept of the Sabda Brahman is that, God created the universe as sound, and that all things have sound vibration as their essence. The writings of Acyutananda are filled with Mantras and esoteric concepts about sounds and their effects on consciousness. For example, in Acyutananda's Rama Rasa Boli, the demon Ravana is said to have meditated on the sound 'Sleem' while focusing on the ten other sacred sounds (yoga-dashakshara) to please Goddess Sita. Even more esoteric is this verse from the Shunya Rahasa where one can see the interwoven nature of internal yogic theory and sound found in Acyutananda's writings:

Oh Jnanins: utter the name of Hari [God]
May be you are the eldest or the youngest.
Piercing six chakras blooms the lotus
Near the ethereal void of air
Between the Sutala and Rasatala
The bee abides at the zenith of the void
One is not a servant of the Lord just because they have a rosary
Unless he utters the name of Krisna in his inner heart;

The Name is the seed, rosary its robe
Rosary is of no use if God's name is mindlessly uttered
The three cords are the three triadic streams
Make your oblations there
Ayudhya, Dwarika, and the city of Gopa
This knowledge is memorized by every soul.

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20th Century's Last Nabakalebara : The Best Managed One

Asit Mohanty



The last Nabakalebara festival of twentieth century had been celebrated in 1996. Apart from being the last one of the past century, it was also the ultimate Nabakalebara of the millennium. Now we have already entered and traversed more than a decade of the new third millennium and twenty first century.

Another Nabakalebara of Sri Jagannath is scheduled to be held in 2015. It also bears much significance. It is the first Nabakalebara of twenty first century and the new millennium.

Janaki Ballav Patnaik was the chief minister when the Nabakalebara was celebrated in Puri in 1996. Historians say it was the most disciplined and well managed Nabakalebara celebration in history. Naveen Patnaik now holds the reign of State Government as the Chief Minister. It is obvious that the next Nabakalebara around a year ahead would be managed under his leadership.

Present CM Naveen Patnaik also bears special attraction and respect for Lord Jagannath. Before taking oath as the CM of the State for the fourth time on 21st May, he preferred to fly to Puri from Bhubaneswar and have *darshan* of the Lord of Nilanchal. After bowing down before the deities in Sri Jagannath temple before 8AM, he had returned back to Raj Bhawan in

Bhubaneswar to take Oath of Office. The Nabakalebara of 2015, apart from its chronological importance is also vital for the present CM as it would be the first Nabakalebara during his rule in Odisha. Peaceful, hassle free conduct of coming Nabakalebara can add another feather to the cap of CM Mr. Naveen Patnaik.

During planning of the last Nabakalebara of last millennium, all the problems and aberrations of past Nabakalebara celebrations had been deeply studied by the then State Government under Mr. Janaki Ballav Patnaik. Because of it the stumbling blocks could be removed and Nabakalebara could be celebrated in 1996 in a disciplined manner without any major hiccups. Present State Government has also started preparations for the coming Nabakalebara. Everyone dreams that coming Nabakalebara would be of better experience. But for it lessons learnt from experiences during previous Nabakalebara celebrations have to be deeply studied. It would become a major catalyst to make first Nabakalebara of twenty first century a peaceful, hassle free, well managed, disciplined festivity.

The ritual of Nabakalebara festival can be well compared to that of the Kumbh Mela at Prayag. **The Bhagavad Gita talks of Lord**



Krishna's discourse to Arjuna where he speaks about the immortality of the soul. He had said that the soul is ever lasting while the body is transient and that the soul leaves the old or diseased body to enter into a new body just as old clothes are replaced by new ones. In this context, the famous *sloka* of the Bhagavad Gita goes as follows : *Basansi jirnani jatha bihaya, Nabani gruhanati naraa aparani, Tatha sharirani bihaya jirna Nyanyani sanjati nabani dehi.*

And Sri Jagannath manifests Himself exactly in the manner of Krishna's discourse to Arjuna, making Himself as unique as He is venerated. For nowhere else in India is there a tradition of an image changing its physical body at intervals. **Though Sri Jagannath is Parambrahma, He has manifested Himself in the form of 'daru' (wood) in the Purushottam Kshetra to perform His 'lila' as a human being. Hence, Sri Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshan—the four images in the Jagannath Temple in Puri—renounce their old bodies at intervals to take on new bodies. This change of bodies is referred to as Nabakalebara. The Bhagavad Gita tells us that every living being on this earth gradually attains youth, becomes old and finally dies. He is reborn in the world with a new body. The Nabakalebara of Sri Jagannath establishes this great truth.** It cannot be said for sure when exactly the tradition of Nabakalebara began in Purushottam Kshetra or Puri. But the tomes dealing with the principles of construction of images tell us about the lives of images built with jewel, metal, wood and clay. According to these tomes, images built with jewel have a life of ten thousand years, metal images have a life of one thousand years, wooden images have a life ranging between twelve and eighteen years and clay images have a life of only one year.

Accordingly, the Nabakalebara of the wooden images worshipped in Puri usually takes place almost after every nineteen years. The Puranas tell us that Sri Jagannath was being initially worshipped as Nilamadhaba, an image carved out of rock in Nilakandara. Later, He was worshipped as an image made of wood. According to the stories chronicled in the Skanda Purana and the Brahma Purana, Indradyumna had built the images with wood that had drifted from the western seas to lodge on the eastern shores. Biswakarma, the celestial carpenter, had built the images as per the orders received in a dream from Lord Krishna. According to the Madalapanji, Raktabahu had attacked Puri during the reign of Shovana Dev of the Bhoumakara dynasty. So during that time, the priests had carried away the image of Sri Jagannath to Sonepur and hid it there by burying it underground. King Jajati Keshari I of the Somavansh dynasty had brought Sri Jagannath back from Sonepur after 144 years and built the new idol according to classical principles. He had placed the Brahma inside the image of Jagannath and placed Him in a new temple which was 38 feet high. Thus, it may be concluded that the first Nabakalebara of Sri Jagannath had been performed in the tenth century. Another ten centuries or a thousand years have since passed by but unfortunately, the years in which the Nabakalebara had been performed during these ten centuries have gone unchronicled. Padmashri Satyanarayan Rajguru, the celebrated scholar on Sri Jagannath, has written about a Nabakalebara being performed in the year 1370. He has also written that the first Nabakalebara of Sri Jagannath had been performed in the Srimandir (Jagannath Temple) in the year 1308. However, according to verifiable records, the first Nabakalebara had been performed in 1574. The second Nabakalebara of the sixteenth century had been performed in 1593. But in the seventeenth



century, five Nabakalebaras had been performed, in the years 1608, 1627, 1646, 1665 and 1684. The first Nabakalebara of the next century was held in 1711 and thereafter, four more were held at intervals of nineteen years. Once again in the nineteenth century, five Nabakalebaras were held, each after a gap of 19 years from the previous one. Thus, these had been performed in the years 1809, 1828, 1855, 1874 and 1893. But in the last century, i.e., the twentieth century, the Nabakalebara had been performed six times, in the years 1912, 1931, 1950, 1969, 1977 and 1996.

And out of the Nabakalebaras performed in the twentieth century, the one held in 1996 was the last of the century. And it was this last Nabakalebara that had been the most well-organized. No other Nabakalebara so far had been carried out to such perfection.

Historical records show that many a time, the Nabakalebara had not been performed because of financial difficulties. They also reveal that the pilgrims and devotees had to put up with a lot of hardship at times because of administrative bottlenecks in conducting the ritual. Ramachandra Dev, the son of Mukunda Dev II was the Gajapati of Puri and the caretaker of the Jagannath Temple at the time of the Nabakalebara held in the year 1828, though by that time, he had already lost the kingdom of Khurda. This led to much financial constraint. So H. H. Alo, the then Collector, had requested Commissioner Pockenham through a letter to sanction funds for the Nabakalebara. Accordingly, though Pockenham had sanctioned Rs.5,500, the money was not sufficient to conduct the ritual. It was only after Nimak Mahal of Balasore donated three hundred gold coins that the ritual was somehow completed. Two lakh people had gathered at Puri during the time of the Nabakalebara in 1855. However, the police had

not been able to manage the crowd and maintain law and order. As a result, three men and four women had died in the stampede that took place near the Singhadwara (Lions' Gate). The next Nabakalebara was held in 1874. Considering the fact that during that time Gajapati Dibyasingh Dev was just a minor under the guardianship of Maharani Suryamani Padamahadei and also keeping in view the mishaps of the last Nabakalebara, the District Magistrate had constituted a high power committee in 1874 and the conducting of the Nabakalebara had been entrusted to this committee.

In 1893, when the time for the next Nabakalebara arrived, Maharani Suryamani Padamahadei was not willing to perform it giving reasons that it involved 'a great deal of trouble and a lot of money'. As a result, only a partial Nabakalebara had taken place that year wherein only the clothes of the images had been changed and the wooden frames had been left untouched. The authorities had cancelled the ritual of Nava Youvana Darshan fearing that there could be a law and order problem because of the huge crowd. However, the authorities had not been able to control the devotees. They remained rooted at the four doors of the Temple, as a result of which the daily rituals of the deities could not be performed. It was morning by the time the rituals could be completed. The Badasinghara Bhog could not be offered to the deities either. The priests had carried the Mahaprasad outside across the walls in pots tied to ropes. Most of the pots containing the Mahaprasad broke in the process and the pilgrims were put to much inconvenience. The Vaishnavites and the Naga ascetics had snatched away the Mahaprasad when it was somehow being carried outside in loads. Even the Chariots were not ready by the Srigundicha Day (the day on which the Rath Yatra is held). By the time the Chariots were ready and



the deities were placed on them, it was already midnight. The Chariots were drawn on the day after the Srigundicha Day. Though the Rath Yatra was scheduled to be held on the fifteenth of the month, the Chariots had not yet reached the Gundicha Temple till the nineteenth. Balabhadra's Chariot reached on the twentieth while that of Sri Jagannath reached only on the twenty first of the month. The next Nabakalebara which had taken place in 1912 was the first of the twentieth century. Though the Chariots of Balabhadra and Subhadra reached the Gundicha Temple on the day of the Rath Yatra, the Chariot of Sri Jagannath reached only the day after. In the following Nabakalebara of 1931, there was a lot of confusion and disorder. In this connection, the newspaper Utkal Dipika had noted: The Chariots did not move at all on the Srigundicha Day this year. It was already evening by the time the deities moved out of the Temple (Pahandi Bije—a ritual of carrying the Lords down the 22 steps inside the Temple, leading to the Lion's Gate). People had waited since morning on an empty stomach to see the Pahandi Bije and thus they suffered a great deal. Moreover, the police acted ruthlessly in order to maintain law and order.

The atrocities of the police had increased further during the Nabakalebara held in 1950. There was a confrontation between the Sadhus and the police during the Rath Yatra that year. The police beat up the Sadhus mercilessly and this led to the Sadhus from outside the State to leave Odisha immediately. The Utkal Dipika records that about 18,000 Sadhus from four communities had come to the Rath Yatra held in 1893 but since the confrontation between the Sadhus and police in the Rath Yatra of 1950 following the Nabakalebara that same year, very few Sadhus came to see the subsequent Nabakalebaras. But the mismanagement witnessed in the next Nabakalebara in 1977 had

crossed all limits. The Rath Yatra of the Nabakalebara was held on 18 July. 'Pahandi Bije' was scheduled to be held at 9 a.m. and the ceremonial sweeping of the Chariot (Chhera Panhara) by the Gajapati Maharaja of Puri was expected to be completed by 2 p.m. However, 'Pahandi Bije' got started only at 2 p.m. that day and was completed at 5 p.m. And 'Chhera Panhara' was done at 6.30 p.m. As a result, Balabhadra's Chariot was pulled only a few feet just for the sake of observing the rituals. Lakhs of devotees returned disappointed and hungry. As if this was not enough, six wheels of Balabhadra's Chariot broke after it had been pulled for a short distance the next day.

It was eleven in the night by the time the wheels were put back in shape. In the process, lakhs of devotees returned disheartened after waiting for two days to pull the Chariots. The matter had caused much anguish among the general public. The Government had been indicted for all this mismanagement. The newspapers and magazines had severely condemned the Government for not being able to conduct the Rath Yatra smoothly and for paying scant attention to the safety and comforts of the pilgrims. It had been alleged that the indifference and lack of sincerity which the Government had displayed was inexcusable.

It was only obvious that such apathy of the Government would be raised in the Legislative Assembly. A great deal of pandemonium was witnessed when the matter was discussed there. Members of the Opposition as well as the Treasury Benches demanded judicial and administrative probe into the matter. Eventually, the Government had to bow down to the pressure and a one-man commission constituting Justice Balakrushna Patra, retired Judge of Orissa High Court, was appointed as per the provisions of



the Commission of Enquiries Act of 1957. The Commission had taken evidence of 69 persons and come out with a 829 page report. The conflicts between the priests and the administrators as well as other kinds of mismanagement were clear from the report.

Evidently, what turned out to be the major reason leading to all the mismanagement was that the *bahutas* or wooden planks made from the wood of the Baula tree, which were needed as support at the back to bind the images with layers of clothes before they started on their journey, had not arrived on time. As a result, the images could not be made ready for the journey and the 'Pahandi Bije' was delayed in the process. Again, the jewels worn by the deities on the foreheads are removed before the journey and replaced with imitation accessories made of cork. These are brought from three different places for the three deities. However, only one music band had been engaged to escort the materials from the three different places. This too took a great deal of time which in turn delayed the ceremonial sweeping of the Chariots. The enquiry also revealed a ridiculous event that had taken place at that time. Someone had telephoned the office of the Jagannath Temple just before the Chhera Panhara that the Gajapati Maharaja would not come to perform the ritual if he was not paid one lakh rupees. So when the Collector of Puri asked him about it, the Maharaja refuted the charge vehemently and immediately set forth to perform the ritual. But it was already dark by the time the ritual was completed and it was not possible to draw the Chariots. The Chariot of Balabhadra had been drawn only a few paces, just for the sake of the customary ritual.

Keeping in view all the drawbacks of the earlier Nabakalebaras, Chief Minister Janaki Ballav Patnaik had taken every precaution from

the very beginning to make the Nabakalebara and the Rath Yatra of 1996 a resounding success. He had initiated preparations in this direction immediately after taking charge as the Chief Minister for the third time in 1995. The first meeting of the high level Review Committee set up for this purpose had been held on 14 October 1995 in the Conference Hall of the District Magistrate of Puri. The Chief Minister had presided over the meeting and said, about 20 to 25 lakh people are likely to assemble at Puri as the Nabakalebara would take place after 19 long years. The priests have to ensure from now onwards that nothing goes wrong at the time. All kinds of precautions must be taken to avoid a repetition of the mismanagement that had taken place during the Nabakalebara of 1977.

The first meeting for the Nabakalebara of 1996 had been held on 5 August 1995, almost a year ahead of the Rath Yatra. Presided over by the Gajapati Maharaja, a detailed discussion regarding the Nabakalebara was held in this meeting of the Temple Administration Committee. Another meeting of the district level officers had been held on 21 August as per the direction of the State Government. The District Magistrate of Puri had presided over that meeting. Twenty three such meetings had been held between 5 August 1995 and 26 May 1996. The Chief Minister himself had presided over the meeting held on 14 October 1995 at Puri and later at the State Secretariat on 25 May 1996. Besides these, several Review Committees had met in phases under the Chairmanship of the District Magistrate of Puri, the Revenue Divisional Commissioner, the Chief Secretary, etc. to remove all kinds of bottlenecks to ensure the smooth conducting of the Nabakalebara. One of the main reasons for the delay in the Pahandi Bije in the Rath Yatra of 1977 was that the *bahutas* (planks made from wood of the Baula tree) had not reached in time.



Hence this time round, the Chief Minister had emphasized right from the beginning that steps were to be taken for the procurement of all necessary materials at the right time. A meeting of the priests had been convened by the Jagannath Temple Administration on 8 September 1995. And the District Magistrate of Puri had presided over the meeting. Similarly, two meetings had been held on 7 September and 25 December with the representatives of the Daitapatis, who were special priests. A detailed discussion about the preparations was held during these two meetings. Extended discussions had also taken place in the meetings of the Administration Committee held on 8 August, 28 October and 26 December.

Wood is one of the major items needed for the Rath Yatra and a total of 862 pieces of wood of different types and sizes are needed for the purpose every year. However, in the case of the Nabakalebara Rath Yatra, the horses, charioteers, brake wood, barricades of the Chariots and side deities (Parsva Devata) are newly built. So a further 128 pieces of Neem wood and 23 pieces of Sal wood are needed for the purpose. Emphasis had been placed in the review meetings to ensure that all the wood arrived at the right time. As a result, 879 pieces of wood had already arrived by the time the second Coordination Committee met on 21 May 1996. Only nine pieces of Phasi wood were yet to arrive. The authorities also made sure that no untoward event would take place because of inferior quality of wood. The wood pieces had been carefully examined and 20 pieces of unsuitable wood had been replaced. The Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs) of Nayagarh, Khurda and Boudh had been requested to provide the 128 pieces of Neem wood that were needed. However, they had expressed their inability to do so. Hence, the DFOs of Athgarh, Sambalpur and Sundargarh were requested to arrange for the same. But the

DFO of Athgarh alone had intimated that he would be able to provide only five pieces. The rest 123 pieces had been collected from private individuals.

The ropes to pull the Chariots and the cloth to cover them were other essential requirements. The Kerala State Coir Board had been requested to supply 12 new ropes even though there were 15 ropes in stock. This had been undertaken as a precautionary measure. In view of the possibilities of a mammoth gathering at the time of the Rath Yatra, steps had been taken to ensure that there would be no problem when the Chariots were pulled. Similarly, the Odisha Textile Mills had been requested in advance to supply quality cloth to cover the Chariots.

Other essential items required at the time of the Nabakalebara include sandalwood, musk, resin and silk cloth. For the first time, the Forest Department of the Government of Karnataka had been requested to supply three kilograms of sandalwood of the best quality. The Chief Conservator of Forests of the Government of Karnataka had given written assurance that he would take necessary steps to supply good quality sandalwood at a reasonable price. Ordinarily, there were uncertainties regarding the availability of musk at the time of the Nabakalebara. About 1100 grams of musk is required for the purpose. Obtained from the musk deer, musk is a fragrant substance which also acts as an insecticide and prevents moss. Hence, musk is used to colour and decorate the deities. More musk is needed at the time of Nabakalebara as new images are made at the time. Traditionally, the royal family of Nepal has had a close association with the Jagannath Temple. Therefore, the King of Nepal had the privilege to offer a special *puja* in the Puri Temple. The King also provided the musk needed by the Jagannath Temple over the years.



Hence, a letter had been written to the King of Nepal to provide the excess musk needed at the time of the Nabakalebara. However, the King of Nepal had banned the hunting of the musk deer as it was an endangered species. As a result, the King informed that it would not be possible on his part to provide the musk. But the priests from Nepal who were residing in Puri had some musk with them. They had been gifted the musk by pilgrims from Nepal. The musk needed for the Nabakalebara had thus been collected partly from them and partly from the open market. Similarly, the Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation had been asked to supply ten quintals of resin needed for the Nabakalebara. The Odisha State Tussar and Silk Cooperative Society had been asked to supply eight quintals of Basungi Silk cloth. In this manner, steps had been taken much in advance to collect all the necessary items. It had been ensured that there would be no problem in conducting the Nabakalebara and the Rath Yatra in a smooth manner.

The Chief Minister was aware of the fact that a proper coordination between the Temple Administration and the priests was highly essential for the smooth conducting of the Rath Yatra. All kinds of problems had arisen in the previous Nabakalebara because of a lack of coordination between the two. However, Chief Minister Janaki Ballav Patnaik was in direct contact with the representatives of the priests to monitor everything.

As a result, there were no deviations from the time-schedule prepared by the Temple Administration Committee at a meeting held under the Chairmanship of the Gajapati Maharaja on 29 June 1996. All the rituals connected with the Nabakalebara had been completed as per the time schedule without any interruption. A record crowd of 12 lakh people had assembled that day

in Puri to witness the Nabakalebara Rath Yatra. Chief Minister Janaki Ballav Patnaik himself was present among the devotees and he had joined them in pulling the Nandighosha, the Chariot of Sri Jagannath, from the Lions' Gate to the Gundicha Temple. All the Chariots had reached the Gundicha Temple before sunset. This was something that had never happened earlier. The pilgrims had been extremely satisfied that everything had gone according to schedule.

And thus, the last Nabakalebara of the century concluded with pomp and ceremony because of the blessings of Lord Jagannath and the untiring efforts of all ranging from the CM officials of different departments and their subordinates, the then District Magistrate, the temple administration as well as the servitors.

People of Odisha expect that the coming Nabakalebara would make Odias proud of their rich tradition, heritage and culture. The last Nabakalebara of last century had become a landmark in the history of management of this festival. It is hoped that its celebrations in 2015 would extend the standard of Nabakalebar festivities to new heights. Mr. Naveen Patnaik is again leading Odisha for the fourth time with a greater mandate and support of Odias. Till now he has succeeded in governance. The Nabakalebara of 2015 would surely be a great challenge before the CM. We all hope he would be able to meet the challenge and set new standards of management of much awaited Nabakalebara festival.



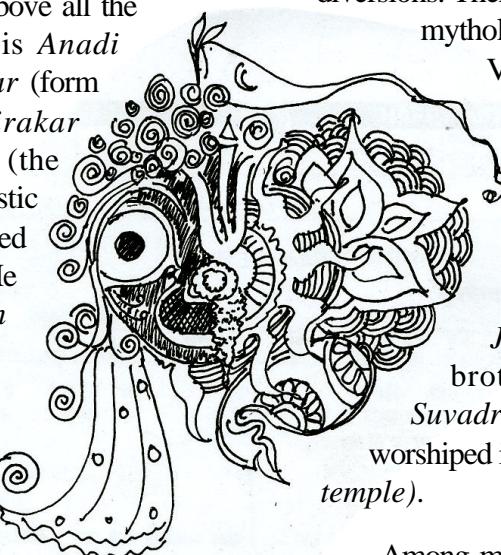
Shree Jagannath: The Lord of the Universe

Dr. Sarbeswar Sena

Shree Jagannath is the sovereign Lord of the Universe. He is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient and also the creator, destroyer and the preserver of the creation. Lord Shiva is regarded as the destroyer, Brahma the creator but according to Hindu mythology and belief, Lord Jagannath is above all the Gods and Goddesses. He is *Anadi* (without a beginning), *Anakar* (formless), *Ananta* (eternal), *Nirakar* (empty) and the Brahma (the Supreme Being) or the mystic syllable of Om. He is addressed in thousands of names. But He is *Kala Thakur*, *Kalia Dian* for the *Odias*. An *Odia* gets utmost pleasure in calling Shree Jagannath in such affectionate names. For Him, Odisha is acknowledged as *Thakur Desha* (the state of the God) and its culture as *Jagannath* cult and that has an unimaginable importance. According to *Odishan* culture, all are equal irrespective of caste, colour, sex and creed in the holy land, *Puri*, named as *Sankhakshetra*, *Shree Purusottamdhama* and *Nilachala dham*. Here a Brahmin embraces a *chandal* (a low caste Hindu) with affection and

love. The sense of equality is the spectacular theme of *Shree Jagannath* cult. This is all possible for the desire of *Kalia Raja* (self willed Lord) *Shree Jagannath*.

Shree Jagannath has different diversions. There are hundreds of instances in mythology and the Epics. He is *Shree Vishnu* in *Satya yuga*, *Shree Ram* in *Tretaya* and *Shree Krishna* in *Dwapar yuga*. In *Kaliyuga* He has His *Kalki Avatar*. All those are the aspects of His incarnations. But *Shree Jagannath* along with His elder brother *Balabhadra*, sister *Suvadra* and weapon *Sudarshan* is worshiped in *Shree Mandir* (*Jagannath temple*).



Among many of His *Lilas* (diversions) *Ratha Yatra* (car festival) is called as *Shreeghosh Yatra*, *Shree Gundicha Yatra* is the most attractive and famous one. On the second lunar day of the light fortnight in the month of *Ashadha* (the third Indian month, June-July) the Car Festival starts. All the three deities make a journey of nine days from this day to *Shree Gundicha Mandir* and it is called as *Mausima Mandir* in the



decorated wooden chariots i.e. the *Nandighosh* of Shree Jagannath, *Taladhwaja* of Balabhadra and *Darpadalan* of Subhadra. The return journey is the *Bahuda Yatra*. The 11th lunar day of the second light fortnight in *Ashadha* is the *Bada Ekadashi* and the deities on the chariots give the opportunity of looking on them in *Suna Vesha* (decoration of gold ornaments) to the whole world. Though Shree Jagannath's *Suna Vesha* in different occasions are made but all do not get the scope of seeing the *Sunavesha* as on the *Ratha* during the *Bahuda Yatra*. The heart of the votary rejoices in devotion. The three deities put on *Mahans* (a weight of forty seers) of gold ornaments. When Shree Jagannath is the richest, how can the *Odias* be poor? The stigma that *Odias* are poverty stricken proves untrue on that occasion. The most affectionate son of the *Odias*, Shree Jagannath is the emperor of emperors and the wealthiest Lord of the Universe. Having a glance on the *Param Brahma*, Shree Jagannath in the chariot the devotee achieves salvation; that is a strong belief that still persists in the religious life of the *Odias*.

Shree Jagannath nourishes the whole Universe. He takes away sorrows and sufferings of the animals, kills the demons and the wicked, protects the innocents and establishes Dharma on the Earth. For these act of sympathy towards the human being He is called as *Bairiganjan*, *Dinabandhab*, *Dinabandhu*, *Daitari* and in many other ornamental names. He establishes perpetual peace on the Earth. He is the Almighty and the greatest. Hence the places and priests related to Him are of highest honour. His *Danda*, *Badadanda*, *Prasad* (food offered to the deity) *Mohaprasad*, *Panda Bada Panda* and even if the cremation ground is called as the *Swarga Dwara* (an entrance to Heaven). Every *Odia* has a desire to be cremated in *Swargadwara* for

emancipation. Similarly, a jolt of *Mohaprasad* purifies the heart and soul. One feels enlightened touching the *Bada danda* and warps his body with holy dust of it. *Dasia Bauri*, *Bandhu Mohanty*, *Matta Balaram Das*, *Salabega a Muslim*, *Dinakrushna* and many others are the examples of noted votaries of having grace from Shree Jagannath. This is possible only because of complete surrender. The sense of "Nirashrayam Jagadisha raksha" can make one nearer to the Lord. By His blessings *Sudama* a poor Brahmin and childhood friend of Shree Krishna becomes the millionaire, the deer escapes from the definite kill of the hunter in the deep forest, the elephant is saved in the sea from the mouth of the crocodile, the sinner *Ajamila* gets salvation and the most spectacular one is the episode of *Draupadi* (the wife of the *Pandavas*) that she is saved from the humiliation of being naked by *Dushasan* (the brother of *Duryodhan*) in front of kings. These are some of the shining examples of kindness of Shree Jagannath. This establishes the inseparable relation between Him and His devotees.

Shree Jagannath has been in the body mind and soul of the *Odias*. Being amazed by His diversions many *Odia* litterateurs have been influenced. Hence *Odia mythologies* and other wings of the literature provide the glory of *Jagannath* and *Jagannath* cult. Many of the *Odia* poets admit their helplessness and what He directs in the Night they only write in the morning. This is their confession. To be honest many *Odia* literary pieces like *Bhajana* (adoption), *Janana* (supplication), *Chhanda* (a canto written in the metre), *Chaupadi* (verse of four stanzas) provide the juice of devotion and a reader is beheld of reading those. Especially in *Chautishas* the story of Shree Jagannath and his incarnation Shree Krushna have been narrated very lucidly. The



Manabodha Chautisha of *Bhakta Charan Das* is the spectacular one. It suggests renouncing the world and to visit the *Shreekshetra* and see *Shree Jagannath* at least once in life time. Similarly *Utkalmanī Gopabandhu Das*, a great poet and nationalist moved by heart and is proud of *Nilachale Dham*. So he writes, “*Jagat Sarase Utkal Kamala / Tanmadhye Keshar Puri Nilachal*”. (The world is a tank/ *Utkal* a lotus/ *Puri Nilachala* the filament of the lotus). Where ever *Gopabandhu* moves and stays, he feels like living in *Shreekshetra*. It is no doubt a noble realisation of the highness of *Shree Jagannath*. Similarly *Bhakta Kabi Madhusudan Rao* has written “*Ki sundar Aha / ki ananda maya/ A vishal sansar/ Dhanya moha prabhu / Ate ananta apara*”. (What a beautiful? What a pleasurable/ the vast world / praise worthy His majesty). The poet believes in the Brahma and expresses its omnipresence. Lord *Jagannath* is the *Avatari* (the source of all incarnations). But the followers of *Shree Krishna* claim that *Krishna* is the *Avatari*. For this confusion the *Vaishnabism* is divided into two sects. Worshipers of *Shree Jagannath* are the *Odishi Vaishnabs* and the followers of *Shree Krishna* are *Gaudiya Vaishnabs*. Similarly *Nilachal Dham* and *Brindaban* are accepted as the prominent sacred places of diversion of *Shree Jagannath* and *Shree Krishna* respectively. The *Odishi Vaishnabs* depend on the path of perception, so they are called *Jajnamargi*. Whereas the *Gaudiya Vaishnabs* believe in love and devotion, so they are *Premamargi*. But a sensible *Vaishnab* finds no difference in it. The mathematical calculation such as plus, minus, multiplication, division of zero is always that zero. Similarly either *Jagannath* or *Krishna* may be the *Avatari* but the Brahma is there in both. Here any dispute in the *Avatarism* of *Jagannath* should be avoided. Both *Jagannath* and *Shree Krishna*

are the sources of supreme divine power. To be more definite *Jagannath* is worshipped in Kali Yuga as *Darudevata* in *Dwapar* as *Shree Krishna*, Popularly known as *Kalindikulia*, *Kadambamulia*, *Charu Trivangia* (charming body bent at the place-neck, waist and the knee) etc. Both the sects of *Vaishnabs* have narrated the excellence of the either Gods in their literature in a lucid manner. Lord *Jagannath* is the source of love and affection. This has been narrated in the eleventh chapter of the *Shreemad Bhagabat Geeta of Vyasa Deva*. That is, “*Twamksharam paramam bedi tabyam / Twamasya biswasya / Paramam nidhanam/ Twameba saswata dharma gopta / sanatanstwam Purusottamam*”. This is expressed in respect of exhibiting *viswarupa* (Whose form is the Universe) by *Shree Krishna* to *Arjuna* in the battle field of *Kurukshtera*. *Ritikabi Upendra Bhanja* has also written, “*Suna kobide Bharat Khande Punya Dham / Jenu Narayan Dehi tenu sehi name he/ Gribanamate Nirvan sarupyakudei*”. He is the saviour and can only provide emancipation that is *Kaibalya*.

The world is clumsy, domestic affairs are troublesome, life is transitory and more important is the loss of peace. Social relations, worldly pleasure; all are shortlived. So saints, Yogis have advised to control the mind by conscience and to search for a devotional life. So, many have tried to cut off the social bondage and to be in search of God. *Bhakta Charan Das* has described the same thought in his poetic work the *Mathuramangala* and he joyfully sings, “*Enu karai bichar/ Toha byatreke Gati Nahin mora/ Jebe sudaya kariba mohare / Mana rakhi pankaja payare/ bhakti bine Daridra jivan / sujnya jananka mukharu sunili / krushna bhajane taranti janili*” (So judged in mind/ non than you/ be kind to me/ keeping the mind near the lotus feet / no need for worldly riches / life



pitable without devotion / heard from the learned / by adoration of *Shree Krishna*, liberation achieved.” So, “*Hari Name ki rasa achhi/pana kala loka taha janichi*” (what a flavours the epithet of God, who tastes it can realise the sweetness). Most of the devotee poets have emphasized the recitation of Hari Nam.

Lord *Jagannath* is always with His votaries. He is sleepless for them. Any moment He is prayed, provides mercy. He is the ocean of kindness and piety. He is the only God of providing *Kaibalya* and none else. So, poet *Dinakrushna Das* writes “*Karai pabitra ana tirtha jale kale snan/ se tirtha name nana durita nasha/ Baikunthe basi baikuntha santoshe / kari ei tirtha kirtan/ karu thanu Dinakrushna sukhe nartan*”. (Bathing in holy water purifies / the name of this pilgrimage annihilates sufferings / gets the pleasure of having peace in the abode of Vishnu/ muttering this pilgrimage /*Dinakrushna* dances in joy). Simple utterance of the name of *Jagannath* is enough for achieving mercy from Him.

Now the soul is elevated, seeks a way to be out of the mortal body. The supreme soul realises the pains and restlessness of it and paves the way of liberation. The soul starts for the *Golakadham*, there it witnesses an eternal amorous pastime. This is the high time, the mystic poet *Laxmikant Mohapatra* writes, “*Kiyese dakhuchi nai se parire / Rahi rahi kede bagare / Do do chinha swar/ sunithili muhin/ kete yuga yuga agara*”. (Who is calling across the river/keeping pause in different skills / the familiar

tone, unable to recognise/ has been hearing ages and ages before.)

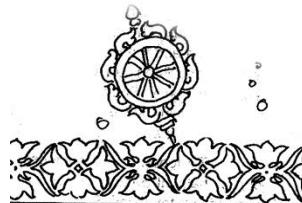
The life-boat floats on the ocean, it staggers, thick darkness approaches, the soul perturbs. Someone stretches His hands and welcomes. He is the supreme soul and the boat man of the life-boat. He can make the soul a safe reach across the river. Then the soul gets the association of the supreme soul. This is possible by virtue of Lord *Shree Jagannath*, not only this He fulfils the aims, aspiration even if the desires of all the creatures on the Universe. In the pore of His skin thousands of Earths are there, His eyes are Suns, head the sky, waist the Himalayas, feet the Nether world, body the Mountains, breathing severe storm. Being excited out of devotion, poet *Dinakrishna* recites, “*Kotibrahmanda prabhu Jagannath, Karanti purna prani manoratha.*” (Lord of the Universe, the merciful/ satisfies the desires). By His grace, the world rejoices in happiness and pleasure. It is rightly described,

“*Khandanat sarbadukhanamakhandananda danatah Swabhavad daruresho hi Param Brahmavidheeyete*”

His blessings are poured on the human race; it is humbly prayed before the Lord of the Universe.

“*Jai Jagannath Swami,
Nayana Pathagami Bhaba Tume*”

Dr. Sarbeswar Sena, Principal, Karilopatana College, Kendrapara : 754223.





Salbeg, You are Really Great !

Er. Raghunath Patra

Salbeg,
You invoked permission of Jagannath
to go to Vrindaban by foot
to feel the delight of celestial pastime
The Lord accorded without doubt.

Devotees' passion gratifies Him
He knows your longing of heart
Your fascination for Vrindaban pastime
He bestowed on you, heart-felt.

Visited Vrindaban with divine charm
But Jagannath haunted you more
Crossing rivers and dense thickest
came back tarrying no more.

Aspired to prostrate Lord Jagannath
on his Return -car Oh Saint,
A great distance was yet to cover
You prayed God in divine accent.

"Oh Jagannath, my heart of hearts
Oh paramount God, stay on car
to have a gracious look of yours"
Lo! the Nandighosh couldn't stir.

What a fortune, till your return
Jagannath paused on Grand Road
You begged from heart of hearts
tears rolled down cheeks, no fraud.

God does not glance at caste
Creed, sect, religion of being



He fathoms depth of devotion
the real ecstasy, divine ring.

Guhaka Sabar was Rama's friend
plums from Savari took with glee
Krishna took food in Bidur's cottage
and had pastime with Gopis, see.

Day and night, Sri Jagannath
spreads His arms to embrace all
His circular eyes without wink
indicate His vision equal.

With you Jagannath so twinned
Your name recalls the Lord's name
You are revered by all Hindus now
Morn and eve with eternal fame.

Where the car remained unflinched
"Samadhi Pitha" stands as monument
Car of Jagannath halts every year
in commemoration, a moment.

You are unique of your own kind
mammoth devotion, none can forget
The poet pays you regard, Oh Saint,
Salbeg, You are really great !

Brundaban Dham, Lokanath Road, Patanahat Sahi
Chhak, Puri-752001.



King of Kings



*Chinmaya Vibek
Trans. from Odia by Dr. Janmejay Dwibedi*

Eyes strain
 To reach you beyond
 The numbers of your holy stairs
 All efforts fail,
 Instead, are seen your shadows only
 You hide yourself
 In some remote cavern
 My prayer cannot reach you
 A lowly self in your creation.

 How can I benefit from
 Your triumphant Car Festival
 How can I penetrate the cordon
 Around you
 Everywhere you have kept your courtiers
 Posted
 Your armed body guards
 Block my way.

 Your twinkling smiles rain
 The riddle I cannot solve
 Houses ravaged or built
 Why should I blame you
 After all I am a speck of your grace.

 O king of Kings !
 Forgive me
 I cannot but pray
 standing at the bottom of your holy stairs
 Be all tears be wiped.



Dr. Janmejay Dwibedi, Daitapada Sahi, Puri.



GOOD GOVERNANCE



ODISHA : The Saga of Prosperity

A visit to the state and a study of its vital statistics reveal that Odisha today is poised to leap into a new era of hectic growth and development. Seen in the backdrop of the dark clouds of the economic slowdown around the country, Odisha could show up as the silver lining.

The factors contributing to the steady growth graphs in different sectors across Odisha are many, but it seems that the biggest contributor has been the decade and half long political stability in the state that helped in steady policy formulation and implementation. The different sectors which are on the upswing are manufacturing, agriculture and the social sector. These form the plinth on which the state has endeavoured to beat the general sluggish economic growth trend in the rest of the country. These are stepping stones in, what the state calls, its inclusive growth agenda route. Odisha's aim is to promote a high and sustainable growth momentum and, as a result, faster poverty reduction as its aim for a broad-based inclusive growth. The Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik, has been able to understand the issues faced by the people and has arrived at solutions that are simple, and having immense bearing on the lives of the people. The government has been addressing developmental issues basically on four fronts-agriculture, industry and commerce, social and socio-political. The stress on industry is bearing fruit, and the state is on way to great achievements. In the social sector, the state deals with age-old issues that need deep understanding to deal with. As in other parts of India, every situation in Odisha is unique to the region and has to be dealt in with the right spirit. This has been achieved by the current dispensation.

The State Government that inherited a virtually collapsed economy in the year 2000 had an uphill task ahead. It took the challenge upon itself, and a series of prudent economic policies and pragmatic strategies to boost the industrial sector were initiated. Soon the situation started to improve, and now Odisha is a frontline state in terms of economic growth and investment offers.

The State recorded an average annual growth of 8.23 per cent in the 11th plan period. Continuing the momentum, the State is all set to achieve a nine per cent growth in the 12th plan period. The real per capita income in Odisha at 2004-05 prices has increased from Rs.14,862 in 1999-2000 to Rs.26,900 in 2011-12, indicating an increase of over 77 per cent during the period. The State has achieved the highest reduction in poverty with a drop of 24.6 percentage point as per Planning Commission estimates.

In terms of investment, too, the State has become an attractive destination for national and global industrial houses. A stable Government with a series of progressive industrial policies has helped



the industries sector to take a parabolic growth. The recent RBI report suggests that the State has received investment offers to the tune of Rs. 53 thousand crores in 2012-13, which is, infact, the highest among all the Indian states.

The socio-political issues are mostly related to the churning of world economy that the country cannot neglect. Starting from child health to overall health of society and education to employment training and employment generation, all these have pre-occupied the mind of the Chief Minister. At this point, the State has done wonders with the resources available. The other important segments are health and life-skills training, the services sector and Tourism.

HEAVY INDUSTRY:

Growth in the manufacturing industry is the accepted norm for inclusive social growth that comes along with the growth in the overall development potential of a region. Engagement of unskilled and semi-skilled workforces by way of providing direct and indirect employment is helping to raise a large number of people above the Poverty Line.

The State's Industrial Policy Resolution has a policy framework that promotes industrial investment. This has led the State of becoming the investment destination of the country and is slowly but certainly becoming the hub of India's emerging industries.

Steel: While a number of steel plants have come up in the State the decks are now clear for the largest Foreign Direct Investment ever coming into India – the steel plant to be set up by Korean Steel giant POSCO. Its last hurdle, the environment clearance from the Ministry of Environment & Forest has been granted, and work is expected to start soon.

The steel sector not only employs a large number of people directly, but also has the potential of generating allied employment in downstream units that come up alongside. A steel plant in itself is a game changer for any region.

Steel would be a natural addition to the existing industry support system that exists. Odisha already has 10 per cent of the installed steel producing capacity of the nation, and backs it up with 25 per cent of the total iron-ore reserves of the country. Such natural synergy is expected to take the state ahead of competitors in other regions.

Aluminium: The other mineral strength of the State is aluminium. Odisha tops the country in installed capacity and actual output and this is also a sector with huge employability, thus providing sustenance to several families in the lower income group.

Power: Odisha is home to the largest resources of power grade coal in the Country. The power sector's support is vital for the growth of heavy industry. The private sector participation in this crucial sector has been opened through the Government's proactive stance and several Independent Power Plants are now set to take part in the generation of electricity. This proactive policy has not only made the state self-sufficient in power production servicing its many needs, especially of heavy industry, but also made the State power-surplus. The State Government has now taken several steps to improve the infrastructure in the distribution and transmission sectors with investment in new lines, transformers and replacement of old equipments in a phased manner. Odisha is one of the few states that does not give state subsidies in the power sector, a decision that is quite admirable in the present scenario.



Realizing that loss in distribution is the biggest setback in power utility, the government has set ambitious programmes for improvement of transmission and distribution system, reduction in distribution loss, shifting of transformers from schools, colleges and Anganawadi premises to prevent accidents, setting up separate feeder for Agriculture/Fishing Clusters, System strengthening of elephant corridors etc. Apart from this, through effective implementation of Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana, Biju Grama Jyoti Yojana and Biju Saharanchal Vidyutikaran Yojana access to electricity for all has been systematically ensured.

The Special actions that the government has taken can be gauged from some projects in certain sectors. Here are some of the projects launched by the Government.

THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR:

While it is making huge strides in the fields of heavy industry and other areas, the mainstay of the economy of Odisha remains agriculture. More and more people are migrating to the cities in search of jobs and more are getting integrated to the urban economy in the State, a phenomenon that is being repeated all over the developing world. Yet, agriculture remains the mainstay for Odisha.

In Odisha, agriculture still provides employment and sustenance, directly or indirectly, to more than 60% of the population. This involves 58 per cent of the total workforce of the state, making it the largest employment sector in the state. The current world food scenario demands more production and hence it was only wise for the State Government to realize the potential of this already established sector and provide it all the impetus it needs for the new century.

Keeping this in view, the **State Agriculture Policy** has been implemented that draws from a **separate budget** created just for this sector. The landless agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and the Other Backward Classes are now in focus as the government stresses on their development and coming out of decades of obscure existence. This budget will have a provision of Rs.7161.84 crore and will serve the well-being of the farmers' community and allied sectors. This budget has been introduced in the state, being next to Karnataka in the country. It includes a special agricultural package for the farmers. Apart from this, farmers will be benefited with the bonus recently declared by the State Government.

The farmer loans are now extremely farmer-friendly, coming at 2% interest from co-operatives and commercial banks. It is also envisioned that the interest rate shall be further reduced to 1 %. There are also deferred payment of arrear for agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and the Other Backward Classes and for those affected in floods and hurricane Phailin. Most of the issues that plague a farmer have been looked into. The big issue in irrigation has been the equipment needed in Lift Irrigation Projects. Minor Lift-Irrigation Projects have been installed and the repair and renovation work of the defunct L.I. Projects are being undertaken through **Biju Krushak Vikash Yojana**.

To make these effective, the State has introduced special feeders that will provide uninterrupted electricity supply to the Lift-Irrigation Points. This is not just for the farmers, but also for the Cluster Cold Storage meant for the Fishermen. What have these efforts yielded? The useful employment of manpower and resources, for one, and the resultant irrigation potential of the State increasing by another 1.2 lakh hectares and thereby benefitting 1,17,000 farmers and marginal farmers. To add to this Kisan Credit Cards issued in favour of the farmers have been converted to Smart Cards for easy



access to agricultural loans. To sincerely address the health care concern of the farmers of the state, Health Insurance facility upto Rs.1 lakh per annum under **BIJU KRUSHAK KALYAN YOJANA** has been extended to the farmers and agricultural labourers for a maximum of 5 members of their family.

All these impetus given to Agriculture have boosted production and the State registered a record production of 11.4 million tone food grains. The Chief Minister received the **KRISHI KARMAN AWARD** from the President of India in recognition of impressive farm output.

Such developments, however, cannot be done in isolation. The infrastructure has to come up for that as well. So there is greater focus now on development of productive infrastructure to ensure peoples' access to basic facilities like healthcare, education, clean drinking water, sanitation, rural connectivity, electrification and common service centres. With the vision of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, several initiatives have been taken to address problems for the overall development of the State.

IRRIGATION:

Considering the importance of irrigation for agriculture sector, 31 lakh 342 hectares of land in the State have been irrigated by the end of December, 2012. Besides, during the 12th Plan period the Government has decided to invest an additional amount of Rs.3000 crores to sink 1 lakh deep bore-wells across the state. Moreover, for installation of private lift irrigation projects 75% concession and for community Lift-irrigation Project 90% concession is being provided.

THE SERVICE SECTOR-TOURISM:

Odisha has always been a tourist's ideal destination. The state has embarked on making this lucrative sector more attractive for visitors, with the launch of the new Tourism Policy. This policy aims at creating more tourism infrastructure that will not only bring in the mega bucks, but also generate employment. There will be ample opportunities for self employment and there are many incentives woven into the fabric of the initiatives to attract investors to the State.

The other special actions that the government has taken can be gauged from some projects in certain sectors that it has undertaken.

THE SOCIAL SECTOR:

No amount of development can be sustained without concomitant development in the social sector. Odisha has addressed this issue on an urgent basis. To this end the Government of Odisha has budgeted for many welfare schemes.

HEALTH

Key indicators emanating from studies in this sector show that there has been a steady improvement of the health of the general population of the state in recent years. The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), for example, has drastically been reduced from 75 (SRS-2005) to 57 (SRS-2011). This decline has been the steepest compared to data from anywhere around the country in the last seven years.



Linked to that is the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR). This too has fallen substantially, from 358 (SRS-2003) to 258 (SRS-2009). The above two generally start off the counting to life expectancy at birth. That indicator has shot up from 59.2 years during 2001-05 to 63.5 during 2006-10, a considerable gain.

Healthcare Services

Health care services for the people in general has seen improvement through the implementation of schemes that ensure quality health care services. This includes the **Emergency Medical Ambulance Services** known as **108**. Along with this the State Government has been vigorously pursuing vital primary and emergency health services through IMR mission, Mobile Health Units in backward and tribal dominated areas. Health services have been made available to 2 lakh people by organizing Health Camps under **BLJU GRAMEEN SWASTHYA SEVA SHIBIR** in 100 places in the rural area of the State. The Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana aids in capacity building, while the Integrated Child Development programmes have been strengthened.

Odisha State Treatment Fund

The State has taken healthcare to another level by providing medical treatment assistance up to Rs.3 lakh. This will be available to all the BPL families, APL families in rural area having annual income of Rs.40,000 and upto Rs.60,000 for APL families in urban areas as well as to inmates of Mentally Disadvantaged Rehabilitation Centre, Orphanages and for the unknown persons involved in accidents.

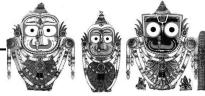
Education :

The State has been taking rapid strides in this respect, and several indicators in the education sector can tell a wholesome story. The 2011 census revealed that the state has an overall literacy rate of 73.45% that rivaled the national average of 74.04%.

What has this achieved? The basic idea was to increase enrolment in schools. That has substantially increased. Along with increased enrolment, the dropout rate at the primary level has come down sharply – from 41.8% in 2000-01 to 0.43% in 2011-12. These two factors together have given a shot in the arm to the State's primary education sector.

To make education freely available, the State has taken initiatives for expansion and improvement in education at all levels. Through the Odisha Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2010, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) at primary grade have increased from 99.06% and 91.83% (2010-11), to 99.69% and 93.30% (2011-12), respectively. The support system includes free text books and uniforms to students. The State also provides free cycles to all girl students and boy students of disadvantaged sections in class Ten as an incentive to pursue study beyond 10th class.

By extending the scope of Scholarship to 10,000 students at primary and upper primary level, Pathani Samant Merit Scholarship for 7500 students at class 6th, 9th and +2 level excelling in mathematics, annual student scholarship to 24500 students at junior, senior, postgraduate and technical education level and educational support to the children of construction workers, fishermen and other disadvantaged social groups it has been very sincerely attempted to provide catalytic changes in the educational system.



The aim is to have 100 per cent enrolment. So the government has relaxed the norms for opening of new primary schools. Special efforts are being made especially in tribal areas to reduce dropouts. Beyond primary and school education, the government effort is developing the infrastructure of the ITIs, Diploma and skill development etc.

EMPLOYMENT :

The State stresses on “skill development and placement linked employability,” for which “a large number of vocational and technical institutions have been empanelled to impart training and facilitating in getting employment.” The State Employment Mission has been ensuring these skill trainings. To create entrepreneurs and well trained human resource base, 1.5 lakh young men and women are being imparted with employment-based training through **Nijukti Mission** every year.

HOUSING FOR THE POOR:

Through ‘**Mo Kudia**’ scheme, Pucca dwelling houses are provided to eligible poor families excluded from the purview of Indira Awas Yojana. Under this scheme, a sum of Rs.75,000 is provided to the beneficiaries in 18 Integrated Action Plan districts while Rs.70,000 is provided to the beneficiaries of the remaining 12 districts.

FOOD SECURITY:

Since 2008 the State Government has been implementing the Rupees 2 per KG rice programme for all BPL families, AAY beneficiaries and APL families in 8 KBK Districts, boarders of ST/SC hostels and from November 2011 about 6.2 lakh Poor and Left Out(PLO) families of 19 poorest districts of the State. From February 2013, the state has converted this scheme into the historic 1Rupee per KG rice programme. At present about 56 lakh families and 4 lakh individuals are being covered by this flagship food security programme.

SOCIAL SECURITY NETWORK :

The State from its own resources is providing a monthly pension of Rupees 300 to nearly 20 lakh eligible old, widow, destitute and disabled beneficiaries throughout the State under **Madhubabu Pension Yojana**. Enhanced pension amount of Rupees 500 is also being paid if the beneficiaries cross 80 years of age. Annual summer and winter assistance is being provided to the above beneficiaries.

MAMATA :

Through the above innovative scheme the State Government has been providing Rs.5000 in four phases to the pregnant and nursing mothers in the state to compensate resultant loss of income and for ensuring proper care of the mothers and their children. By now about more than one million women have been assisted and funds to the tune of Rs.403 crore have been transferred to their accounts directly.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT :

The State Government believes in political empowerment of women where they can take decisions on development agenda. Legendary leader and former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik, recognizing this potential of women, had started 33 per cent reservation to women in Panchayati Raj institutions and Urban Local Bodies. Taking his initiative forward on empowerment of women, the State Government has increased the reservation of women in these bodies from 33 per cent to 50 per cent.



The State's flagship programme **MISSION SHAKTI** aims at the empowerment of women. It has covered nearly 58 lakh women in rural and urban Odisha and in order to make the women of the State self-sufficient and improve their economic condition, over 5 lakh 36 thousand Self-help Groups have been formed under Mission Shakti Programme. Through different income generating schemes and Bank loan they have been empowered both socially and economically. Furthermore, to lessen the physical stress of women at working places, the State Government has provided financial assistance of Rs.10,000 to each Self Help Group for purchasing drudgery reduction equipment. This level of empowerment is critical to the overall prosperity and growth of the state. The skilling process through the State Employment Mission takes up this challenge, creating opportunities at the same time.

RURAL CONNECTIVITY:

To construct bridges for providing all weather rural connectivity **BIJU SETU YOJANA** was started in 2010 and has moved fast forward in providing all-weather connectivity to all the villages in the State. The objective is to construct 600 bridges within 3 years with the expenditure of Rs.2085 crores.

With the objective to convert all rural roads to Cement Concrete Roads, the State has currently allocated Rs.1,000 crore for construction of 5,000 kms. of cement concrete roads in rural areas.

S.C. & S.T.DEVELOPMENT:

Land Rights to the Tribals : Odisha has achieved the rare distinction of distributing land rights to maximum number of tribal families under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 and individual titles to the extent of 4.37 lakh hectares of forest lands have been granted in favour of 324737 forest dwelling tribal families including 17145 most primitive and vulnerable tribal groups(PVTGs).

For facilitating residential education to the S.T. & S.C. category students, total 2689 nos. of 100-bedded Hostels have been constructed out of which 2471 nos. of Hostels are meant for the girl students.

Stipend/Scholarship of over Rs. 200 crore provided to more than 12 lakh S.C. & S.T students annually.

56 thousand tribal families of 7 backward districts covered under Food Security through OTELP.

GOPABANDHU GRAMEEN YOJANA:

This scheme is meant for development of rural infrastructure in the key areas of *SADAK, BIJLI & PANI* in the districts not covered under Backward Region Grant Fund.

SAFE DRINKING WATER

To provide safe drinking water to 22,984 villages, 8,592 piped water supply projects have been implemented. Steps have been taken to supply drinking water to 854 Gram Panchayats. Besides, arrangements have been made to facilitate piped water supply to 1048 tribal villages through OTELP.

BIJU KBK/KANDHAMAL O' GAJAPATI YOJANA

Special attention is being paid for all-round development of backward and underdeveloped regions of the State. For this, State Government has implemented Biju KBK Yojana for undivided Koraput, Bolangir and Kalahandi districts with a provision of Rs.120 crore and Biju Kondhamal O'



Gajapati Yojana implemented for Kondhamal and Gajapati districts from its own resources. Under these schemes, infrastructural development of these regions relating to Electricity, Road and Water has been undertaken.

NEW FRONTIERS:

Transparency in governance –

Transparency is key to effective governance. Therefore, the State Government with a single-minded determination has been putting in place better mechanisms to infuse transparency into administration. The State was one of the pioneers to implement confiscation of properties of public servants convicted in corruption cases and establish a number of special courts for swift trial of corruption cases.

The State has again taken another pioneering initiative with the passing of the Odisha Lokayukta Bill in the State Legislative Assembly. This is going to be an all encompassing mechanism in handling transparency issues in the State.

The State also implemented the Right to Services Act 2012 under which citizens are ensured of timely delivery of as many as 63 services of 10 Government Departments. This has ensured a hassle-free provision of services to our citizens.

Facing the Fear factor

The 1999 Super cyclone had virtually spelled doom for the State. Fourteen years since then, another cyclone Phailin, having the potential of similar devastation, hit the coastal districts of the state. But this time, the State was ready. A coordinated evacuation plan was executed with textbook precision and nearly a million people were evacuated before the cyclone hit. And then, the world noticed us, the brave people of Odisha. The special representative of UN Secretary General came to Odisha and met the Chief Minister to personally handover an award in recognition of the effort. Now we are on a mission to maximize our preparedness and support other states and countries facing similar calamities by sharing our experiences.

The knowledge of millennia has come to the aid of Odisha. Age-old habits have been found to be sound in scientific base, traditional hospitality has been transformed into huge business ideas in tourism and the immense natural wealth has carried the state forward to new frontiers of the modern world. The Government has been able to superbly blend tradition with modernity, thereby keeping the interests of the tribals and the downtrodden high in the minds of policy makers.

Travelling around the State, one finds the nature of development work impressive because these are found to be in sync with the ethos and beliefs of the people of the region. Human aspirations are aligned with their roots, and hence it was necessary to address situations in the backdrop of a culture of millennia, not alienating the population with a top-down approach. Odisha is growing, bottom up, towards a modern State, high on productivity and prosperity. The Naveen Patnaik dispensation deserves kudos for this.

Inclusive growth, a topic that the state is not deviating from, can be achieved if the current push towards overall growth is maintained. The state has to move ahead with all power and determination and the skill and stewardship of the State's Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik should suffice.



Salabeg : A Renowned Saint Poet of Odisha

Dr. Mohammed Yamin

Among the devotional poets of Odisha, Salbeg occupies a paramount position. Salbeg the renowned saint poet composed about one hundred fifty devotional songs including eight Sanskrit verses which are called *Patitapavanastaka* and there are six *Bhajanas* in Hindi and Bengali languages. But interestingly nowhere in his *Bhajanas*, Salbeg has indicated anything about the name of his father and mother except his origin as a Muslim. In one of his widely acclaimed *Bhajana*, Salbeg says, 'I am a 'Yavan' (Muslim by caste), My father is the son of a Mughal and mother the daughter of a Brahmin. I am born in such a family that the Hindus do not even take water from me'.

In most of his poems, Salbeg has given a short account of his life but nothing about the date and place of his birth. From *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* of Mirza Nathan it is known that Jahangir Quli Khan alias Lalbeg was the Subedar of Bengal for one year (1607-1608 CE.). He had invaded Odisha to please his patron Jahangir, the Mughal emperor. During one of such invasion he abducted one accomplished young Brahmin widow from Dandamukundapur. Being greatly charmed by the exceptional beauty of that young and accomplished Brahmin widow Lalbeg accepted her as his wife. In course of time at Cuttack, this Brahmin widow gave birth to a male child who was named as Salbeg.⁽¹⁾ One year after the birth of Salbeg, his father Lalbeg died on 27th April,

1608 CE. This has been corroborated by a few evidences. It can be examined in different grounds. Jahangir Quli Khan (Lalbeg) was appointed as the Subedar of Bengal after the accession of Mughal Emperor Jahangir to the throne of Delhi probably between 1605 to 1608 CE. As a trusted general, he must have been entrusted with the task of the invasion of Odisha including the temple of Jagannath at Puri.

From 1605 CE. Lalbeg lived only for three years. But Ramdasa in his book *Dandyatabhakti Rasamruta* has mentioned that Salbeg had, once in his youth, gone with his father to the battlefield where he sustained severe injuries which could not be healed up in spite of best treatment. He then, lost all hope of his life and began to cry before his mother. The mother, while consoling her son on his grief, narrated the pathetic tale of her previous life. On hearing this Salbeg with confidence determined to live further. In the subsequent chapters of Ramdasa it is known that Lalbeg suddenly left Salbeg and his mother and took no interest on them for a long time.⁽²⁾

Probably then he must have requested the new Subedar of Odisha for the maintenance of Salbeg and his mother and they must have been properly taken care of him with the passage of time, when Salbeg came of to age, he must have earned good reputation by being enrolled as a soldier in the Mughal army and subsequently



would have sustained injuries while fighting. Then hearing everything from his mother about his past life, he must have lost all faith in his life and felt remorse. But the pious mother must have advised her son to dedicate himself to the worship of the Gods according to Hindu customs and rites. But apprehending, his son to be an atheist of being born of a Muslim father, she must have satisfied herself by administering an oath of allegiance at the feet of the Almighty.⁽³⁾ He stayed for one year at Brindavana and then returned to Puri to see the car festival of Lord Jagannath. But on the way he suddenly falls ill. *Srigundicha* (car festival) was drawing nearer. He tried his utmost to reach Puri to have a *Darshan* or glimpse of Sri Jagannath. But being helpless to reach the place of his destination before the return of Car Festival (*Bahuda Yatra*), he walked all the way to Puri by composing songs in emotion and reciting them in a very pathetic tone in which he appealed Lord with all devotion to wait for him till his arrival at Puri.

*"Jagabandhu he gosain
Tumba Sricharana binu Anya gati nahi !
Satas Panchasa Kosha diga disunahi
Moha jiba pain nandighosha thiba rahi".⁽⁴⁾*

(O' Lord please wait until I reach the destination to see you)

Jagabandhu, my Lord,
Friend of everyone in this world
I have nowhere else to go
Than seeking shelter
At your pretty, auspicious feet
Fifteen hundred miles is too far
A distance for me to cover.
Till I arrive there and get a glimpse of you
Do remain on the Nandighosh.

XX XX XX XX

Says Salabega, I am a Yavana
An outcaste and fallen.
Do heed my supplication,
O Lord of Vrindavan !

The above sad prayer of Salbeg, the devotee, could reach the ears of Lord Jagannath. If the legends are to be believed, on the day of return Car Festival, *Nandighosha* the Car of Jagannath, on its way back to Srimandira, did not move and remained static till the arrival of Salbeg at Puri. The place where the car remained static to give a darshan (glimpse) to Salbeg was later utilized by the devotee in composing his '*Bhajanas*' in honour of Lord Jagannath (as the *Bhajana* cited above on the title Jagannath) for the rest of his life and finally he was cremated there after his death. The tombstone of this great devotee is still standing in the *Badadanda*, the Grant Road at Puri thereby raising peculiar questions in the minds of orthodox Hindus.

Sundarananda Vidyavinod, one Bengali critic in his book *Srikshetra* has mentioned that Sri Jagannath was extremely pleased with the devotion of Salbeg and appeared before him in the Lion's Gate in the form of *Patitapavana* (Extinguisher of Sins) and in his honour, Salbeg, wrote his famous *Patitapavanastaka*. Lord Jagannath also known as *Patitapabana* or Savior of the fallen.⁽⁵⁾ An eminent critic of Bengal Sukumar Sen,⁽⁶⁾ in his work *History of Brajaboli Literature*, has not only recognized Salbeg as an established poet of Odisha but also his Vaishnavite verses written in Hindi, Bengali and Odia literature. Sukumar Sen accepting him as a poet of 17th century Odisha he expressed his view that three poems of Salbeg are quoted in *Padakalpataru* of which one is written in Odia.

From the above points it is interesting to note that in *Srikshetra* there is absolutely no difference shown to people of different castes and creeds. In fact, the problem of caste is not at all seen in front of the Lord i.e., Jagannath culture. Again it can be said that, it goes beyond the creeds. Lord Jagannath has had a Muslim disciples, Salbega, a Muslim devotee, is celebrated disciple of the Lord, who composed



hymns singing glory of His master. So was Javan Haridas, another Muslim disciple.⁽⁷⁾

K.N. Mohapatra in his historical work *History of Khurda* has depicted Salbeg as a disciple of Yasovanta Das and Shyamananda Goswami, according to Sudarsan Das's works on the poet Yasovanta Das and Gaudiya tradition respectively. It seems improbable that Salbeg cannot be a disciple of Yasovanta Das of the 'Panchasakha Group'. He might have received his initiation from the disciples of Yasovanta Das. From another sources *Rasikamangala Kavya* it is known that Vaishnava Shyamananda dies in 1552 *Saka era* or in 1630 CE. It is not possible that, Salbeg on his mother's advice must have accepted Shyamananda as his Guru just on the eve of his death, As there is no information available about his Guru from his thought provoking 'Bhajanas', Ramdas has also not given any information about his Guru, rather he accepted his mother as his direct preceptor since he received that from his mother who advised her son to dedicate himself to Lord Krishna her family deity.⁽⁸⁾ The above facts suggest that, Salbega developed a strong sense of devotion towards Lord Sri Krishna, later on he might have come in contact with a number of saints but none of them was directly accepted as his spiritual Guru. If he accepted anyone as his Guru, he must have mentioned his names in some of his *Bhajanas*. He had great reputation among the saints of his contemporary period and as such his tomb stone could be constructed on the *Badadand*, the holy Grand Road at Puri.

Salbeg's Devotion

Salbeg, in fact, was brought up in an Islamic culture but getting inspiration from his mother during the time of his illness, he instantly developed a strong sense of devotion towards Bala Mukunda. Hence, he started composing 'Bhajanas' eulogizing the lovable aspects of Lord Srikrishna. Sometimes after his return from

Brindavana, he composed a few of *Bhajanas* and *Chaupadis* on Sri Krishna's childhood activities and the amorous sports. Then he stayed at 'Sri Kshetra' for a considerable period and after witnessing the Car Festival and other Festivals of Lord Jagannath and hearing his glory from the devotees, he must have composed his *Bhajanas* based on Lord Jagannath in the second phase of his devotional career. And in the last phase of his career, generally the saint poet gets involved in the discussion of the true knowledge of the Lord and the mystery of life. It is important to note that, Salbeg's *Bhajanas* have been classified into four different groups like:

- (1) Bhajanas on Jagannath.
- (2) Bhajanas on Krishna and Rama
- (3) Bhajanas on the Brahmajanas
- (4) Bhajanas on the spiritual laws of life and on Siva and Shakti.

These above classified *Bhajanas*, have been mostly collected from the twenty thousand Palmleaf Manuscript preserved at Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar. Some printed materials are from vocal songs of some beggars.⁽⁹⁾

Salbeg's Bhajanas devoted to Sri Krishna

Intoxicated with 'Krishnarasa' Salabeg must have desired to go to Brindavan. There he might have heard about the dalliances of his presiding deity from the saints and seers of the place and greatly lost in the Bala Mukunda form of Sri Krishna. The child like behavior of Sri Krishna towards his mother must have fascinated Salbeg, therefore, he composed a few *Chaupadis* describing the amusements of that child Sri Krishna. In the composition of a poem *Sunapua Nachaire* Salbeg described the problem created by child Krishna to mother Yasoda while taking his foods. The affectionate mother Yasoda feeds the Krishna by reciting a few songs. Thereafter, Salbeg must have



composed poems depicting the youthful vigour of Krishna. He attracted by the beauty of Krishna, the ornaments of his body and therefore, his heart has been completely absorbed in Him and he has forgotten his own self. It can be said that, like Gopis, Salbeg thought himself as Gopi, danced in tune with the flute of Krishna and taken refuge under Sri Krishna flute. The *Bhajanas* of Salbeg dedicated to Sri Krishna are considered as the jewels of Odia literature so far as their lucid language thought and the style of music are concerned. No doubt it can be considered as a glorious period of the Odia literature. 17th century composition of Salbeg greatly influenced the poets like Banamali and Gopal Krishna of the later period. They had developed a strong devotional love towards Lord Krishna.⁽¹⁰⁾

I consider it suffice to narrate the experience of contemporary of Salbeg like Mira Bai, Dharia Sahib and Kabir Das. The experience of ecstasy and love of Salbeg to Krishna has been in the same parlance as has been experienced by Mira Bai, Muslim saints Dharia Sahib and Kabir Das. Mira Bai says, "I am ascending, Chakra by Chakra, my consciousness is ascending from one floor to another floor, from one Chakra to another Chakra, gaining from *Mooladhara* to *Ajna*, coming down to *Mooladhara* again going to *Ajna*, trying to reach the top floor (*Sahasrara*) who shall that great awareness down in me, What is this sound that I hear," There should be some symbol or indication of the manifestation of higher awareness when it comes. It does not just come without any sign. These signs are called *anubhuti* (experience) and they exist in the thousands.

Muslim saint Dharia Sahib asks "who is playing the flute in *Sahasrara Chakra*". This means that he hears the *Anahata Nada* (the unstruck sound) in the form of flute. "The sound of the *Mridangam* (drum) is being heard, and within myself I see the spring. Close your eyes and see flowers and flowers and flowers. If you

go to the Himalayas you can see it, you will see flowers- endless, endless flowers". The same ecstasy and love experiences by Kabir Das he narrated thus, "An every day song you sing in a room which is perfectly solitary. There is nobody there. A light is burning, please do not move, you will miss the vision of the *Deepak* (light)." Kabir tells how when the drum is being heard, it is an indication of the descent of higher consciousness.⁽¹¹⁾

Salbeg's Bhajanas on Lord Jagannath

Salbeg accepted Jagannath as Sri Krishna and depicted the vivid description of Jagannath as a cowherd boy in the Gopapur, the holder of the Gobardhan hill and the destroyer of the eight demons. Salbeg was also deeply worried over the removal of Jagannath from Puri (Nilachal). On account of the repeated invasion of the Mughals, the then Gajapati king failed to protect the temple. Hence, he advised the *Sevakas* of the deity to shift them to a secluded place. When all arrangements were made to send the deities to that place on a bullock cart this became unbearable on the part of Salbeg and therefore, he composed:

*Kene Gheni Jauchha Jagannatha nku
 Aambhe Darshan Karibu Kahaku
 Khuntia Daka Dele Pahandi Bije Kale
 Bijaya Kara Prabhu Chapaku;
 Kula Badhunkara Radi Pandaye Gada Gadi
 Bidhata Bama Hela Odissaku;
 Bada Deulu Bahari Sagadire Bije Kari
 Renu Je Padu Thiba Sri mukhaku;
 Kahae Salabega Nirmalya Kanhu Heba*

Dheek Dheek Ambha Jibanaku,⁽¹²⁾ (Poem 11/
Page.12)

Where are you carrying away Jagannatha,
 The Lord of the Universe
 Of whom shall we get an audience
 Of whom shall we get a glimpse
 Attendants shout and announce,



XX XX XX

Salabega thus bemoans, feeling sad.
How can now the holy rice be dried
Our lives are truly accursed.

Permanently he decided to stay at Puri to make his life purer by taking the discarded *Tulasi* from the body of that Great Lord Jagannath. He (Salbeg) was convinced that Lord must offer him shelter under his lotus-feet. At Puri (Srikshetra), during his stay he was familiar with the amusements of the various incarnations (*avatars*) of this Great Lord and had finally given vent to his feelings through his world famous *Bhajanas*. Although, Salbeg is a famous devotee of Sri Krishna numerous *Bhajanas* have been dedicated in honour of Sri Rama, Hanuman, Siva and Shakti. A few of *Bhajanas* have been recently found out in which he has invoked Siva to free himself from the world.⁽¹³⁾

Salbeg composed *Bhajanas* on Sri Jagannath and other God and Goddesses of Hindu emotionally, though, he was not a Hindu, his songs were melodious, heart throbbing and extremely sentimental. His *Bhajanas* are appreciated by people of all walks of life because his language was simple and forceful. In 17th century many poets of Odisha composed many *Kavyas*, *Chaupadis* and *Bhajanas* etc., but they have not been so popular like that of Salbeg. The *Bhajanas* of Salbeg are greatly admired by the people of Odisha. Whatever may be the availability of his *Bhajanas*, in conclusion it can be said that, Salbeg was on the whole, a saint poet of the mass, an ideal devotee, a reformer and the creator of an age in Odia literature. In fact, Salbeg is a shining star of the Odia literary sky and will shine the whole spectrum for all time.

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Lord Jagannath, the Deity of Mankind

Om Prakash



Odisha and Lord Jagannath's temple in the past has faced the attacks of Mughal (Muslim) rulers for many times. During the 18th century King Ramachandra Dev was the then ruler of Odisha. Odisha was frequently experiencing the terror of attacks from the powerful Subedar Taki Khan.

Taki Khan by nature was an anti Hinduism nated person. So he was always with intention to demolish the temple of Lord Jagannath. At that time few parts of Odisha was also under the regime of the Mughals. So King Ramachandra Dev was worried for the safety of Lord Jagannath's temple.

Finally according to the conditions of Taki Khan King Ramachandra Dev accepted Islam and got married to Taki Khan's sister. Thus though Lord Jagannath's temple got secured but king Ramachandra Dev lost his rights to enter into the temple and finally Lord Jagannath's idol was constructed near Lion's Gate (Singha Dwar) for him. And the idol was named as Patitapabana who continued to give Darshan to the devotees deprived of entering into Srimandira.

King Divyasingha Dev and Lord Jagannath

Prior to 1972 the managerial aspects of Srimandira were under direct control of the Gajapati king who is regarded the first servant of the Lord Jagannath. Subsequently the Government of Odisha removed the power from them to get involved with the managerial aspects

of Srimandira and appointed an A.D.M. to look into the matters of Srimandira Management.

Ganapati Bhatta and Lord Jagannath

Ganapati Bhatta was born in a Brahmin family of Kaniari village of Karnatak State. From his very childhood he was interested in spiritual discussions and worshipping Lord Ganesha. As he was deeply loving Lord Ganesha he thought that only Lord Ganesha is the Bramha (Supreme Soul). Once when he was reading the book Bramha Purana he found it that in Kaliyug Bramha has appeared at Nilagiri (Puri) and his name is Lord Jagannath. This really created an interest in Ganapatti Bhatta to see who this Lord Jagannath is? After a long travel finally he reached Puri and there he thought to go to meet Lord Jagannath instantly. Again he was with the thought that those who will see the supreme soul (Bramha) they will achieve salvation instantly and they will not take rebirth. Thus after reaching Puri when he found people returning from Lord Jagannath's temple with Mahaprasad on their hand he got seriously confused. He thought it that if Bramha is really existing here then how these people are returning back instead of getting salvation? Thus he thought it that Bramha (supreme soul) is not existing here. Thus he started returning with a sorrowful heart. Lord Jagannath knew this and he appeared before Ganapati Bhatta in the guise of an old Brahmin. He asked Ganapati Bhatta that what is the reason



and why are you feeling sorry? Then Ganapati Bhatta explained everything and the Brahmin told it that you are thinking wrong Bramha is existing here and he is satisfying the desires of the devotees according to their demand. Thus Ganapati Bhatta got satisfied with this answer of the old Brahmin and then he went to see the lords. That day was Snana Purnima, so the Lords were preparing for the rituals. Ganapati Bhatta saw the Lords and thought it that Lord Ganesha is the supreme soul and when the Lord here is not Lord Ganesha, then how can he be the Bramha? Thus he got confused again. He was about to leave, Mudhiratha, one of the Lord Jagannatha's Sevayat at the instance of the Lord ran to Ganapati Bhatta and told that the Lord can exhibit any form as per the will of the devotees. When Bhatta returned, he saw the Lord in the form of Ganesha with big trunks. From that day onwards, the Lords are dressed in Ganesha form on the Snana Purnima day.

Sailor and Lord Jagannath

Captain Bito was a sailor and that day he was bringing a big bell from a port of France to the church of Pondicherry. The ship was floating on the chest of ocean and the sunny morning was creating a quite pleasant atmosphere. But at that time the boy at the deck saw it that a big animal is rushing towards the ship and that may destroy the ship. The boy got terrified he screamed and called the captain. Instantly the captain ran to the deck and could see the alarming situation of a storm. All the crew members got terrified. But the captain found it that amidst all these trouble a person is sitting with confidence in front of a photo which has two big black eyes. The captain went to him and asked him about what is he doing ? The man told that he is praying to his Lord Jagannath who can save all from the danger. The captain initially did not believe him but finally he got persuaded by the words of that man and he told it that if the Lord Jagannath can save us then

I will donate this bell to him. The man told it that if you all pray before Lord Jagannath, I am sure he will save us because I have seen it in my life that whenever I have prayed the Lord, He has helped me. The captain became confident with these words and all started praying Lord Jagannath. Finally at the end of the prayer they found it that the storm has gone away and they all saluted Lord Jagannath with their heart full of devotion and finally keeping his words captain came to Puri and donated the bell to Lord Jagannath, which is still found in the temple premises.

Jabana Haridas and Lord Jagannatha

Jabana Haridas was born in west Bengal and he was brought up in a Muslim family. But from the very childhood he was interested in worshipping Lord Krishna. He was so deeply immersed in love with Lord Krishna that all times he was chanting the name of Lord Krishna. As his parents were dead from an early childhood that is why at a very young age he left his home and reaching near the river Ganga he started staying at the place called Phulia. There every day he started singing devotional songs and chanting the name of Lord Krishna. Seeing this people became attracted towards him and he became popular. That made the Kazi of that locality envious towards him. He complained to the Muslim ruler that being a Muslim, Haridas is going against the religion by chanting the name of Lord Krishna, the Lord of Hinduism. Listening this, the king became angry he called Haridas and asked the reason. Haridas replied it that only names are different but God is one.

Thus listening this king became angry and ordered his soldiers to kill Haridas. The soldiers carried away the order but nothing happened to Haridas. Seeing such incident the soldiers were scared and they told Haridas that if he will not die then the king will kill them. Haridas went for meditation and the soldiers thought it that he has



gone dead. Then Haridas was thrown to Ganga but again floating on the water of Ganga he reached at Phulia. The ruler after seeing such incident got afraid and begged pardon from him. After that a Jamindar tried to prove him characterless but his effort also got ruined. Then Haridas went to Adwaitacharya, and there he learnt a lot about Lord Vishnu from Adwaitacharya. After that with Srichaitanya he reached at Puri. Haridas finally breathed his last when Srichaitanya was performing Kirttan with great devotion.

Bishar Mohanty and Lord Jagannath

Bishar Mohanty was the record writer in the court of King of Kujanga Garh of Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha. Though by his profession he was the record writer but he was not interested with his profession. He was always interested in listening about Lord Jagannath and always thought that the servitors of Lord Jagannath are very lucky as they are serving the Lord in a close proximity. He was always interested in listening about Lord Jagannath and when any servitor from Puri visited Kujanga Garh at that time he was happy to listen about the glory of Jagannath.

Once it happened that one servitor came to Kujanga Garh but he was not happy. He was with the bad news of the death of King Mukunda Deva and the attacks of Kalapahad who was always with the efforts of destroying Hindu temple. He also told it that Kalapahad had taken away the idols of the Lords and was trying to destroy the idols of the Lords. This had great impact on Bishar Mohanty. Returning to home all night he went on thinking about the Lord so at night he heard someone saying him "you have to do some work for me, so come forward my dear Bishar." Bishar got up and praying Lord Jagannath started walking and finally he reached near the river Ganga. In the meanwhile a devotee of Lord Jagannath gifted him a *mridanga*. Reaching near River Ganga he thought it Kalapahad may burn

the idols but he will not be able to burn the Bramha, so he jumped into the water of river Ganga. And as a result of that he found the Bramha there. But with the fear of attack he kept the Bramha in the *mridanga*. Finally he returned to Kujanga Garh. Again after a long time Orissa's king Ramachandra Dev got his empire back and at that time the Lord again returned to Shrimandira. Again all the temple rituals started once again and the day on which Mahaprasad got reintroduced after a long interval that day Bishar Mohanty prayed Lord Jagannath to make him closer for all times. Due to the introduction of Mahaprasad once again that day the temple was in a festive mood and at the evening all found it that Lord has taken Bishar closer to him.

Madhabendra Puri and Lord Jagannath

Madhabendra Puri was born in West Bengal. The man was a great lover of Lord Krishna. He was always engaged in worshipping Lord Krishna and he was also engaged in chanting the devotional songs of Lord Krishna. Finally he got so deeply immersed in the love of Lord Krishna that he left for Brindaban. After reaching at Brindaban he started searching for Lord Krishna. He was tired and feeling hungry and thirsty. At this time it happened that a boy from a milk man family came to him with milk pots and offered him milk to take. So he took milk. The boy instructed him to construct a temple and before Madhabendra could say anything to him the boy who was really Lord Krishna vanished immediately. The next day Madhabendra went to that place and there inside the grass he found an idol of Lord Krishna. He told the villagers everything and the villagers with great joy constructed a temple there. Then Madhabendra engaged himself in the work of looking into the management systems of the temple, so that there will be no disturbance in Lord Krishna's rituals. But once when he was sleeping he found it that Lord Krishna in dreams is speaking him to bring



Malaya chandan (The sandal cream prepared in a particular method) from Puri for him to make his body cool. Thus listening this Madhabendra left for Puri.

While going to Puri he reached at Remuna of Baleswar district of Odisha. There he saw the Lord Gopinath who was Lord Krishna also. Then he with love in heart started chanting the name of Lord Krishna sitting in the temple. There he listened it that during night the Lord is offered Khiri (A dish prepared by rice, milk, sugar, cashewnut, kismis and some specific items are added to it to make it tasty. It is also called Khiri in Odisha). Madhabendra got interested to have Khiri but as he was not ready to ask anybody for Khiri so he remained silent. At night it happened that the Lord in the dreams of the chief servitor told the servitor that my devotee Madhabendra Puri is worshipping me with hunger and thirst. So I have stolen a pot full of Khiri for him. It is placed near my idol. You go and serve it to him. The servitor heard this and after that he ran to the temple. There he found the pot filled with Khiri. Again he reached Madhabendra Puri and giving the Khiri to Madhabendra he told everything. Madhabendra was overjoyed. But from that day as the god had stolen Khiri for his devotee that is why people started calling him Khirichora Gopinath. He is also now known as Khirachora Gopinath by the passage of time. After that Madhabendra reached at Puri and there prayed Lord Jagannath to help him to get *malaya chandan*. Madhabendra was successful in arranging the sandal paste with the blessings of Lord Jagannath. On the way back he reached near the temple of Khirichora Gopinath. There at night the Lord appeared and told him that I can't tolerate your pains any more so I have come from Brindaban. Madhabendra listened everything and the next day offering the *malaya chandan* he started singing the songs of Lord Krishna with great devotion.

Bhakta Salabega and Lord Jagannath

Great Devotee Salabega was born in a Muslim family and was the son of Lalbega. Lalbega was a leading warrior in the Mughal army and on those days the Mughals were always trying to capture and demolish Srimandira. Once when the Mughal warrior Lalbega was returning from Puri near Dandamukundapur locality of Puri he found a beautiful young Brahmin widow returning from the Bathing Ghat. So he kidnapped the lady and finally by compulsion married her who later came to be known as Fatima Biwi. Salabega was the son of Fatima Biwi and Lalbega. From his childhood he listened about Lord Jagannath, Lord Krishna, and Lord Rama from her mother.

After the death of Fatima Biwi when Salabega was a kid once he got stricken by a severe disease and all the doctors left the hope that Salabega can survive. One day when he was on bed he heard the Bhajans and thought the great Lord Jagannath who is the god of the entire universe will be able to cure him. Then he started praying Lord Jagannath and finally got cured. After that he became a great devotee of Lord Jagannath. But for that reason he was discarded from his own house. Then he started moving here and there uttering the name of Lord Jagannath all times. Finally he went to Puri. It was the car festival time and the chariots were getting pulled, Salabega was not allowed to see Lord Jagannath on the chariot as he was the son of a Muslim. So he resided in a house which is very nearer to Srimandir. When the chariot of Lord Jagannath came nearer to his house he started weeping. Suddenly the chariot stopped there. Salabega watched the God happily and thereafter this was apprised to the priests. From that day, Salabega came to be known as the great devotee of Lord Jagannath.

Bhakta Dashia Bauri and Lord Jagannath

The great devotee Dashia Bauri was born in the Baligaon of Puri district. He was a great



devotee of Lord Jagannath. Though he was born in a lower caste and a poor family, he always offered prayers to Lord Jagannath and attached himself to the Lord by heart and soul.

One a great incident happened and this is a teaching on how Lord helps a devotee indirectly. One afternoon, Devotee Dashia Bauri was intensely involved in the writing of a Jagannath Bhajan. Suddenly his wife came to him and told him with anger that, "You see! You are always busy in the divine service of Lord Jagannath and neglecting the household necessities. I have not taken any food for last four-five days. How can I survive?" After listening this Dashia Bauri became surprised and asked, "Everyday, you are giving me the food at right time and why are you telling that you have not taken the food for last few days?" His wife answered, "You are very innocent! I am preparing food for you from the rice which you brought five to six days back by keeping my stomach empty." After hearing the sacrifice, Dashia Bauri felt that he is not able to fulfil his duty towards her as her husband and he suggested his wife that if she wanted she could marry someone again. After listening such a statement from her husband, his wife replied that she could manage with him under any adverse situation.

At that moment suddenly they heard that a person is calling from outside, "Dasha ! Dasha !!" Dashia Bauri went outside the hut and found the village leader. The village leader immediately gave him rice and a few cowries and requested him to weave a new dress for him. The village leader also told him his intention behind the new dress. He expressed his intention to visit Puri, the land of Lord Jagannath during the annual car festival. After knowing this Dashia Bauri could not check his ecstasy and asked like a child to the village leader that, whether he could give some more cowries to him so that his desire to visit Puri during car festival could also be fulfilled. The

village leader happily agreed and offered, "Why you want to visit alone then? Come with me so that you will not face any trouble during the journey to Puri." Thus Dashia happily accepted the offer and promised to prepare the dress for the village leader for car festival, which was only two-three days away.

Dashia Bauri then came to his wife and told with joy, "See the mercy of Jagannath ! You were asking for rice and the money. And Lord himself came and gave me the things that you were demanding." She was surprised and asked where Jagannath came. I saw only the village leader who came and gave these things to you. Dashia replied, "It is not so easy to understand Him. The Lord helps sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly. The Lord actually sent you the rice and cowries through our village leader. The Lord's mercy and activities are always inconceivable."

At last the day came and Dashia reached Puri. But he was not able to enter the temple as he was from lower caste. Then finally standing at Lion's Gate the only offering that he had the coconut, he offered O' Lord Jagannath takeing coconut and surprisingly Lord Jagannath Himself accepted it from His great devotee. And from that day the name and devotion of Dashia Bauri and love of Lord Jagannath for his devotees turned to a great legend.

Santha Balaram Das and Lord Jagannath

Santha Balaram Das was a great devotee of Lord Jagannath and he was such a lover of Lord Jagannath that he was just feeling it that beyond Jagannath there is nothing in this world. Once the famous saint who was the writer of Dandi Ramayan got an idea to make a visit to Lanka, which according to the Ramayan was once the capital city of the demon Ravana. He told this to Lord Jagannath and at night he went to visit Lanka along with Lord Jagannath. Jagannath during that visit told him to hold his gold Jhari (a typical



ornament of gold). After finishing their visit Balarama Das forgot to return the ornament. But at the morning the priests found it that the ornament has been stolen by somebody and when saint Balaram Das came with that he was accused as the thief and was taken to the court of the Gajapati king. But later on Gajapati came to know from Lord Jagannath that Balaram Das was not guilty and he was a great devotee of Lord Jagannath. So he paid due respect to him.

Balarama Das was in love with a prostitute called Jamuna Bai. When once he was with the prostitute he found it that it was the very day of car festival and the chariots are going to be pulled. He ran to the Chariot of Lord Jagannath but the priests found it that he had just returned from the prostitute's house and thus he was debarred from witnessing the festival.

With tears in his eyes Balaram Das went to the seashore and there he prepared three chariots on sand for the two brothers Jagannath, Balabhadra and their sister Goddess Subhadra. Praying with tears he told it that if you are truly my God then the chariots on the Grand Road will not move and you three will come to this sand chariots of mine.

Suddenly all the three chariots of the car festival stopped and after a huge effort the people were unable to move them even one inch. Everybody got worried so finally the Gajapati king got the message and he along with the priests on fasting started praying to Lord Jagannath. Then Lord Jagannath appeared in King's dreams and told him everything and instructed to pay proper respect to Balaram Das and to beg pardon to him. The king did accordingly and the chariots started moving along with his great devotee Balaram Das.

Guru Nanak and Lord Jagannath

Guru Nanak came to Puri at the last phase of his visits, but the priests did not allow him as

he was dressed like a Muslim. They told that they can't allow a person who is dressed like a Muslim. Nanak felt insulted and at the Lion's Gate he prayed to Lord Jagannath with tears and suddenly Lord Jagannath appeared on his palms. The other people got astonished with this and considered saint Nanak as a great devotee of Lord Jagannath.

It was evening and everybody asked Nanak that whether he is going to perform the evening prayers to Lord Jagannath or not? Nanak nodded his head and told "I am going to do Aarati" (A Special ritual performed near all Hindu deities) to Him. Suddenly he raised his hands and the instruments used for Aarati appeared on his hands. Then he started performing the rituals for the three gods the people also got astonished that they clearly saw the three Gods. Everybody started praising him but few bad people started spreading the rumour that Guru Nanak is a Tantrika and is using mesmerism on people.

Few days passed and people started disbelieving him but one evening Nanak showed a black man, along with a white man and a beautiful lady. Then when he ran to catch them they jumped to a well nearby and vanished. Thereafter people trusted Guru Nanak. Till today that place is also seen at the Baauli Matha (The hut of hermit) of Puri.

Lord Jagannath is always enthusiastic and kind towards His devotees and behaves them like a friend and a companion. For the compassion of Lord Jagannath towards His devotees, He is rightly called Antaryami and Bhaktabatsala all through the ages.

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Krishna Tattwa in Srikshetra Srimandir

Dr. Ramakanta Kar

In the movement of Bhakti cult of the culture of Devotion in Odisha, many divine souls had glorified the Vaishnab religion or Vaishnavism. They had also spread its tenets to different places of the Nation by their deep devotion and Supreme attachment to the divine Trinity : AUM (OM), Sri Jagannath, Sri Balabhadra and Maa Subhadra, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, Satwa, Raja and Tama etc. By displaying their unselfish devine love, they had never craved in their altruistic mission any thing in life except His exalted grace. From the beginning of the creation Lord Jagannath was worshiped as Narayana, Nrusingha, Nilamani, Nilamadhaba, Darubrahma, Trinity, and lastly as Sri Krishna (Madanamohana).

Mainly Krishna Tattwa came to the temple when Sri Chaitanya came to Srikshetra at the time of Prataparudra Deva dynasty in 16th century. Prataprudra Deva was impressed seeing the emotional dance of Namakirtana and was interested to take Diksha from Sri Chaitanya as Guru and became a Goudiya Vaishnava. He forced the chief of the



Sevakas to be Goudiya Vaishnava. But all Sevakas denied because they have to eat fish daily and come to the service of the Lord. The king also for this purpose could not force as he donated the ponds to supply fishes to the Sevakas. The main aim of the king was that the Sevakas will not be attracted to various attractive Bhoga items prepared for Prasad of Lord. Prataparudra advised the Sevakas not to be Vashnavas, but forced them to take Vaishnava *chita* from their fore head to the nose. Now also the inner Sevakas (anganagi Sevakas) as Singhari, Puspalaka, Pujapanda etc. are taking Vaishnava *chita* and *shikha* daily. Raja Prataparudra forced to the residential employees Kotha Karana, Lekha Karan and Tadau Karanas to take Diksha from Guru. Now also many karanas are taking diksha and using Tulasimala, *chita* and also worshipping Radha- Krishna in their own residence.

There is a *smruti* of Sri Chaitanya, one day he entered to Srimandir having a Kamandalu (water pot) with full of water and tried to pour



the water on Garuda Mahaprabhu, but the particular Sevaka did not permit him and abused him. Then he poured water on the lower part of the Garuda pillar. It gave pain to the heart of Sri Chaitanya. He informed to Atibadi Jagannath Das who was awarded Atibadi title by Sri Chaitanya. Sri Jagannath Das went to Raj Bhavan and informed this case to the king. The tradition was in the temple that any outsider cannot serve the Lord without the Sevaka. So the king could not punish the Sevaka on duty and he thought what to do for Guru's satisfaction. The king dug a square size deep on the lower part of the Garuda pillar and kept a statue of Sri Chaitanya (Nimain) and named the deep as Nimain Khal which is now known as Nimer Khal in Bengali language.

After the arrival of Sri Chaitanya in the year 1521, the Krishna *Tattwa* entered into the temple. Lord Jagannath was represented as Madan Mohana (Sri Krishna) and the traditions, rituals and all the celebrations as Jhulana Jatra, Chandan Jatra, Radhaastami and Janmastami etc. are being celebrated in Sri Mandir. It is stated was living lively in the residence of Pandit Kashi Mishra named as Radhakanta Matha, Balisahi, Puri.

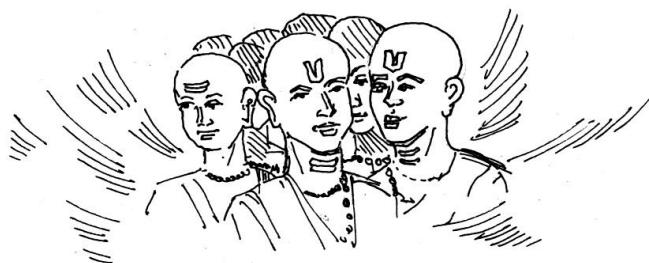
The rituals in the temple are being performed in Yogic process as Astanga Yoga of Patanjali as Sri Jagannath is Yogi, Buddha,

Sthitapragna. The Sevakas are *Sanjani* as they are exercising in Jaga and Akheda having muscular body fit to serve the Lord. This is the fast step of Yoga : Yama. The Sevakas are tressing on the cleanliness. They are performing spiritual practices, Puja, Aradhana and Japa sitting on Sukhasan or Padmasan. They are doing Pranayama, Nyasa, Mudras at the time of rituals. They are adopting Pratyahara worshiping through forms and incarnations: Sakara and Nirakara. They are performing Puja with Dharana or one-pointedness. They are meditating on the Ratnasinghasana and they are also getting Samadhi, God-realisation. When they die, the fire from the cooking place (Rosha Sala) goes with his dead body to the Swargadwar or Burning Ghat. Lord Krishna has spostly advised to Arjuna in Bhagabat Gita :

I do not live in Baikuntha, but where my uncounted devotees sing and meditating, I remain there.

Jay Jagannath !

Dr. Ramakanta Kar, Editor, Yoga Pallava, Kar Nivas, Gudia Sahi, Puri-1.





A line of Trust for you.... My God, “Lord Jagannath”



Archana Kanungo

‘O’ my dear Lord Jagannath....I don’t have any word to expressexcept my unbelievable trust for you.....

“A line of Trust for you....My God, “Lord Jagannath”

“I trust you” for giving your blessings to me...and trusting me with your pride...

“I trust you “for helping me and motivating me by your side...

“I trust you” for the beliefs...I never knew I had...

“I trust you” for making me smile...whenever I feel sad...

“I trust you” for encouraging me and keeping me always in your mind...that I never thought I’d find...

“I trust you “for all your love and care for me and how you make me feel your presence with me... But most of all I trust you...Because I know you are my God...You would never let me in Sad... That is the reason “My Trust” is standing above the ocean....which makes me feel that I am in the heaven...

I wrote your name in the sky...But the wind blew it away...

I wrote your name in the sand...But the waves washed it away...

I wrote your name in the glass house...But the hammers smashed it away...

I wrote your name in my heart...And forever, it will stay...

Because My Trust is above than Wind and Wave....Which always makes me save...

Every time I saw you...I get the feeling of happiness

Every time I meet you...I feel unlimited gladness

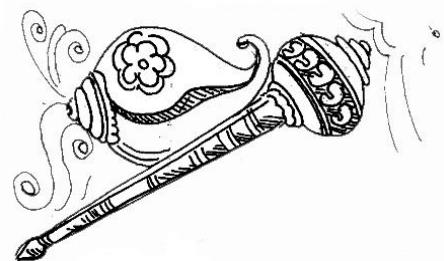
Every time I swear you... I think I can fly

Every time I remember you...I believe I can tell you hay....

Because, I trust your blessings for me forever...

I can’t let you go....want you in my life to work together”....

A line of Trust....from a small devotee...



Archana Kanungo, CME, IRJSSCE, Post Box: 170, GPO, Bhubaneswar.



Come Back Krishna

Bharati Nayak



Oh Lord ! Since the day you left,
This *Brajabhumi*¹ has lost
Its sheen and colour, Its joy and laughter,
In every corner
Emptiness prevails, wind has stood still,
River has stopped its gurgle,
The sweet strain of your flute cannot be heard,
The happy voices of your
friends have become silent
On their faces laughter has died,
Each tree, each vine,
and every rock miss their Lord,
They miss your magic touch,
Out of sorrow flowers droop their heads
Your pet cows look for their Lord.

Akrura's chariot did not come back,
Cruel Akrura plotted and stole our Lord.

The Kadamba tree is waiting,
the Tamala vine is waiting,
All the roads of Brajapuri² waiting,
all the boys and all the ladies
of Gopapuri³ waiting,
Waiting eagerly your dear Radha,
Oh Lord, do not turn a rock,
Do not torment your father,
do not torture your mother,
Do not tear the fragile heart
of your sweet beloved,

When will you come back, Oh Lord ?
When will again river Yamuna feel
the touch of your lotus feet ?

Only once you look back and
spread your graceful glance,
Where you spent your happy days.
The air and earth, carry your breath.
Water in the river and water in the well,
Reflect your thousand images.

The clothes you once stole,*
Still conceal your lotus fragrance.
Oh Lord, do not be cruel,
do not be hard hearted,
Do not forget whom you left, for who are left,
Never forget their beloved Krishna, Oh Lord,
Be kind, be benevolent, and come back.

1, 2, 3 All these names refer to one place. It is the place where Lord Krishna spent his childhood days.

* Lord Krishna as a boy had playfully stolen clothes of Gopis while they were taking bath.



The Ultimate Way of Salvation

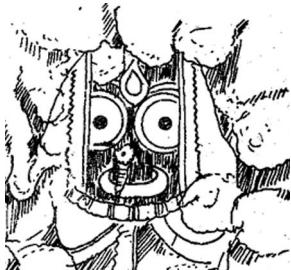
Abhaya Kumar Jena

From birth to death
I hear only one name
Oh ! Lord Jagannath
the saviour of the World.

From dawn to dusk
I listen to your music
that mesmerises me
through mind and soul.

From vice to virtue
all deeds done by me
are nothing but the result of
your wish and command.

From ignorance to wisdom
the zigzag journey of my life
touches the sacred sands of Badadanda
the ultimate way of salvation.



Patitapaban - The Reformer Supreme

Rajat Kumar Kar

On the chariot is Patitapaban
indicates His name
None else is He
than reformer supreme
His sight removes
all crimes.

Your heart is the chariot
He is on it
dirt cannot remain it must quit
with Lord on the throne
it is ever clear
misdeeds recede washed for ever.

Dear devotee !
Lord Patitapaban
smiles at you return the smile,
with force you say
"misdeeds and crimes
shall be kept at bay."



Abhaya Kumar Jena, Sub-Post Master, Kanika Rajbati,
Cuttack-8.

Rajat Kumar Kar, N-1/183, Ananya Niketan, Nayapalli,
Bhubaneswar.





Rathe Tu Bamanam Drustwa

Dinabandhu Rath

O Pususottam !
(Baman on the Chariot)
Pray, Pray my Lord !
Do'nt bless me
with Salvation.

I never aspire
It is neither entralling
Nor encovraging
may be, an infinite golden zero
I rather quail to hear Lord !
I am unfit for such a great favour
Sages may prefer
I am no sage my Lord
Rather a sinner
With lust greed and attachment
I only want a Darshan (glance)
A glance is enough.

Nothing can vie
Never do I want a reward
I only bow to you
On this fastive occasion
'Sirgundicha Yatra'
Pray my Lord !

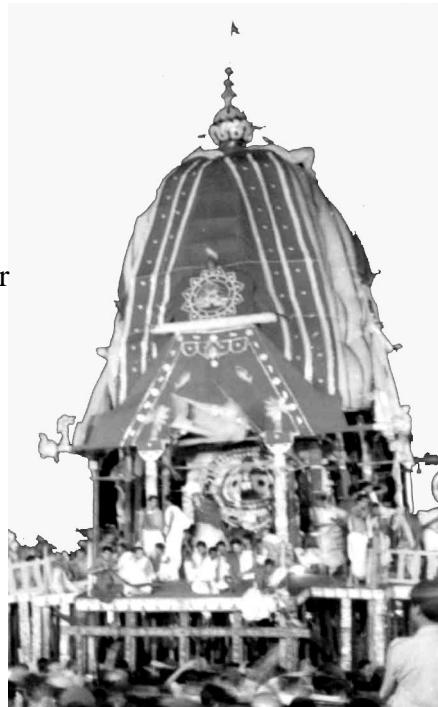
A common man I am
I want existence
Not extinction
I want life

Not redemption
Do'nt send me to a no-return zone Lord !

I want to be born
again and again
To enjoy the
colourful world of yours.

Mother's love
Father's care
wives soothing touch
children's pranks
can they be forgotten
Even gods covet them.

Pray Lord !
If I am to be favoured
For my Darshan
Bless me with a thousand births
that
I may enjoy your sport (Leela)
In thousand lives,
Jai Jagannath



Dinabandhu Rath, Tiadi Sahi, Puri.



Classical Odia Language in the Digital Age

Subhashish Panigrahi

Odisha's documentation and archival history dates back to the pre-Kalinga civilization that existed more than 5,000 years back in which today's Odisha was a major part of it. It, later was more vibrant when Kalinga kingdom and was widespread from Ganga to Godavari, geographically consisting of modern day Odisha entirely and partly Bangladesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chattishgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telengana and part of Tamilnadu and Kerala. The epigraphs of cave painting in Gudahandi and stone inscriptions of Hatigumpha in Udayagiri complex are a few examples of the early documentations that the ancestral Kalingan tribes had made. Furthermore, the early Buddhist poets of Kalinga (popularly known as *64 Sidhapada*) wrote "doha" (spiritual verses) in Pali language. Pali is the language of all of the Buddhist literature and predecessor of modern Odia, Maithili, Bangla and Assamese language and has deep impact on many other Indic languages. Odia has travelled through a long journey of "*Tambapata*" (bronze plate inscription), "*Talapatra*" (palm leaf manuscripts), printed books since early 18th century and e-books in the modern days. Years of history that have perished during invasions by foreign invaders could have told more about this civilization. Modern Odisha state, so far has been able to uphold the

pride of having the largest number of palm leaf manuscripts (over 20,000 manuscripts) in the world. Odia printing and publication industry is spread across all the 30 administrative districts of Odisha and other Indian cities like Kolkata and New Delhi and to some extent in some parts of Surat. A few million books would have been printed starting from the first book '*New Testament*' that got printed in 1809.¹ In this chronology there comes the new age reading tools "e-books" or electronic books less formally initiated in the eighties by students of Regional Engineering College, Rourkela (Now National Institute of Rourkela) and now crossed a decade.²

Odia got classical status on 20 February this year after 5 other Indian languages on the basis of its literary heritage of over three millennia. Interestingly, it is older than most of the most spoken languages in the world. Like many other mighty civilizations, traders of this region conquered places and took their language and culture to their occupied colonies. Early traders of Kalingan Sadhabas were trading silk and spices with South Asian countries. With them travelled Kalinga's language and culture. When all of the other language's have been able to have a strong presence on the Internet, online content available in Odia is way limited compared to even other Indic languages. It has been almost a decade since



Odia support is available in most computers across operating systems. But, the digital desktop publishing (DTP) published resources are still not available in a searchable manner – not on internet or in a computer locally. Currently, the Odia publication industry uses proprietary standard fonts for Odia typing. Akruti, LEAP office, Shreelipi are name to few. All of these were the only means for printing books using desktop publishing at one point of time. But, these encoding systems are out-of-date. The major drawback of these fonts is, they have regular Latin characters replaced by Odia characters. If a document is typed using one such fonts is sent to someone it is difficult to even read or reuse if the person in the receiving end does not have the exact font used for typing. As already mentioned the fonts are commercial and proprietary and it is mandatory to buy them to use. In reality most of the users do not buy and use pirated versions of the software for work. The printed documents typed in one standard is not compatible with the other one. To avoid this problems, an advanced universal standard called “Unicode” was released in early 2000. Unicode has both Odia and Latin characters in a font that allows both the scripts to be displayed correctly at the same time. It is universally compatible and all the operating systems have Unicode fonts installed in the computers. This takes the pain of installing multiple fonts to access any typed text. Searching any text typed in Unicode is as simple as googling something in English. Moreover, documents typed using one Unicode font could be read using another Unicode font. Unfortunately, none of the Odia newspapers have their publications in Unicode at this moment. This, practically does not allow any reader to search, access, reuse and quote any content. Same is the case for all other published resources like books and magazines. More than 80 per cent of the published content are not even released online and also not archived.

Many publishers, intimidated of online content plagiarism have been protecting their publications. Unfortunately, copyright laws in India are not stringently practiced unlike the west. This has given rise to a parallel piracy market for the movies and music over the years. Interestingly, books are not of that much demand as music and movies are. As a result of the lingua-cultural shift to English from native languages regional language publications are not widely sold in the post-colonial Indian book market as compared to the English publications. The case of the use of Odia language as a language of governance is still not put in place. Odia is still to be used as a medium for official communication in all of the government offices. English medium educational Boards have been domineering over the Odisha state Board. Despite of these challenges, number of Odia dailies is slowly growing. There are around 100 newspapers published daily from various regions of Odisha. It is essential to note that news archives, unlike literary writings have much of any kind of high commercial value. So is in the case of scholarly and research publications. If all of these publications could be made available online in digital form that will take Odia literature to the global audience. This triggers the need of A) making sure the forthcoming publications are not just typed in Unicode but made available online, B) digitization of published books and making them available free on internet.

It is essential to take measures to ascertain the forthcoming publications use Unicode standard and digitizing published matter and publishing them online. Online content could be made available in Unicode and has trillion times reach than printed matter. As a vast number of the users use Microsoft’s Windows XP they could either upgrade their operating system or move to completely free and open source and Linux based operating systems like Ubuntu. At this moment,



Odia has far less content on internet. Odia Wikipedia tops the list of Odia Unicode content websites and is the largest Odia online encyclopaedia with over 8,000 articles. Available for free on or.wikipedia.org, Odia Wikipedia is a community project where any user could create, edit and modify content. The articles being encyclopaedic and referenced from other reliable sources has some level of authenticity. As this is a small project and is developing it needs more voluntary contribution to grow to a larger project that could serve the purpose of an Open Educational Resources (OER) for students. There are a handful of web and news portals maintained by individuals and organizations that have Odia content in Unicode. The other upcoming project is Odia Wikisource which is an online library. Odia books that are useful for the Odia speaking community like classical literature, religious scriptures, dictionaries and lexicons, journals and research papers and manuscripts could go online on this platform. The most important thing about these two projects is that they both have only volunteers as contributors and anyone and everyone could contribute. Any individual or organization who is interested could add a lot of value to Odia language by contributing the process of digitizing content and making them available for free. These projects, additionally are released under Creative Commons Share-Alike licenses that allows free reuse, modification and commercial reproduction of content. Many valuable books could also be part of Odia Wikisource.

Srujanika, a Bhubaneswar based organization in collaboration with National Institute of Technology, Rourkela and Pragati Utkal Sangh, Rourkela has scanned over 760 Odia books. Out of these, over 200 books are hosted in a non-profit project “Open Access to Oriya Books

(OAOB)” and hosted at: oaob.nitrkl.ac.in. Organizations like Manik-Smrutinyas and Institute of Odia Studies and Research have re-licensed books of noted author Dr. Jagannath Mohanty and Dr. Debi Prasanna Pattanayak and Subrat Prusty respectively to Creative Commons licenses for free, commercial distribution. Majority of the resourceful magazines like The Utkal Prasanga could be also made available in Unicode standard by changing its copyright terms to Creative Commons licenses. Larger debates are also needed to convince authors and knowledge and information producing organizations/departments like universities and government’s departments (e.g. Information and Public Relations, Department of Mass Education and Department of Statistics.) to migrate from proprietary copyright restrictions to reusable licenses like Creative Commons licenses. This will not only help for more public-private collaboration and knowledge production but also taking language resources to masses which is discontinued because of lack of updated technological advancement like use of Unicode font and digitizing valuable content. Government portals need Odia localization in Unicode standard so public get access to information in Odia language and this could make e-governance much more easier. Government notifications that often are released publicly are found to be released in image formats. Many such public and private information could just be released in plain text that will increase the searchability, accessibility and reusability million times.

Footnotes :

- 1 Pattnaik, Pushpashree. Presentation on digitization of Odia books in Utkal University (21 February 2014)
- 2 Mohanty, Jagadish, eSabada. eOdissa.com (2009 -2010)



Evolving Paradigms in Odisha State Finance: An Empirical Analysis

Dr. Asit Mohanty

Abstract

Effective management of the state finances in India is crucial in triggering higher inclusive growth. Analysis of the past data shows that there has been substantial improvement in the management of state finance of Odisha in terms of significant decline in key deficit indicators in state finance, effective liquidity management and prudent debt management. Curtailment of economically unproductive expenditure without adversely affecting capital expenditure, restructure of debt, implementation of FRBM Act and MTFRP have made a turnaround in management of State finance in post 2002-03. The proposed empirical study attempts to bring out the deteriorating trend in state finances of Odisha in pre 2002-03 and compares improvement in post 2002-03 and examines to what extent the recent reform measures taken by states are helpful in reducing the deficits. The study also makes an attempt to do a critical in depth reviews of the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act and make an attempt at examining effectiveness and suitability of FRBM Act through a quantitative analysis. Structural Break technique has been used to find out improvement in the management of state finance. This study details the areas of reform in expenditure and debt management of the States. This study also emphasizes on capital productivity and tax efficiency as the sustainability parameters so as to have higher growth while adhering to FRBM (Amendment) Act, 2011. The State needs to capitalize the good governance of the state in attracting more private investment in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode.

1. Introduction

Sound and efficient management of the state finance with qualitative and effective liquidity and cash management is a critical factor for the sustainable growth rate in Gross State Domestic Product. During the period 1980-81 to 2013-14, the GSDP of Odisha has witnessed a compound average growth rate of 13.21% at current prices. A new trend in GSDP in Odisha has been noticed since FY 2003-04. From 2003-04 to 2012-13, the annual compound / annual average growth rate in GSDP has been 16% at

current prices as compared to 10% rise in GSDP during 1992-93 to 2002-04. This growth pattern is quite impressive if it is compared with national average as well as other developed states. On five year moving average basis, the GSDP at constant prices has registered a growth rate of 9.5% as compared to national average of 7% per cent since FY 2003-04. Besides, since FY 2004-05, per capita income of Odisha is rising at a rate which is higher than the national average.



The index number of GSDP (with 1980-81 = 100.0) shown in chart 1 has gone up by 4.70 times from index number of GSDP at 1656 in 2003-04 to index number at 7791 in 2013-14 (Chart 1).

High levels of fiscal deficit relative to GDP tend not only to cause sharp increases in the debt-GDP ratio, but also adversely affects growth. Both revenue deficits and fiscal deficit, thus, reveal the fiscal health of an economy. Either revenue deficit ratio or fiscal deficit ratio is due to the deliberate decisions to spend beyond revenue collection or because of low tax revenue yield which is not in tune with cash outflow of the economy. The fiscal situation of Odisha represented by the various deficit indicators has worsened during entire 1980s and 1990s. In 1980-81, Odisha was a revenue surplus state at 2.01%. After a decade, the revenue deficit ratio, fiscal deficit ratio & primary deficit ratio (ratios are relative to GSDP) were reported at 1.34%, 6.52% & 3.08% respectively in 1990-91. Again a decade after, the revenue deficit ratio, fiscal deficit ratio and primary deficit ratio (ratios are relative to GSDP) reached at a peak at the level of 5.48%, 7.68% & 2.19% respectively in 2001-02 (Chart 2).

As a consequence, outstanding debt to GSDP ratio has increased from 31.60%, witnessed in 1992-93 to a peak level 55.35% in 2002-03. It is established that high deficit ratios have fuelled the rising debt to GSDP ratio during this time period. In terms of relative ratio of outstanding debt relative to total revenue receipts (TRR), it has risen from 2.07 in 1992-93 to a peak level of 3.41 recorded in 2001-02 and 3.84 in 2002-03. As a result of high deficit ratios that has triggered rising trend in the debt ratio, the ratio of outflow of interest payment relative to TRR i.e. interest coverage ratio has gone up from 18% to a peak level of 40% in 2001-02 and 35.13%

in 2002-03. The number of days when Government Account was in overdraft with the RBI has declined from 169 days in 2002-03 to 152 days in 2003-04. In fact, RBI had stopped transaction with the Govt. twice during 2002 as the Govt. has defaulted on overdraft.

Subsequently, there has been improvement in revenue deficit (RD) ratio, fiscal deficit (FD) ratio and primary deficit (PD) ratio. Consequently debt and interest payment ratio have improved. In 2012-13, Odisha is a revenue surplus state at 0.18% and moderate level of fiscal deficit ratio and primary deficit ratio at 3% and 1.30% respectively. There is turnaround in the debt ratio and interest coverage ratio which are reported at 19.83% and 10.56% respectively in 2012-13. These ratios are complied with the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act (FRBMA) implemented since 2004-05.

Besides, ways & means advance is not availed since FY 2006-07 which again proves efficient liquidity management in state finance of Odisha. In fact, Odisha is the only state which has not availed ways and means for seven years consecutively. As a result of paradigm shift in fiscal indicators and efficient liquidity management, the state has witnessed rise in growth in GSDP.

In this backdrop, the objective of this paper is to examine the effectiveness in management of Odisha State Finance by employing the data from 1992-93 to 2012-13.

The study has been organised into five sections. Besides the first introductory section, Section 2 provides a review of related literature. Section 3 provides research gap, objectives and methodology. The theoretical background in which the deficit indicators affect other fiscal variables is described in section 4. Results and analysis are discussed in section 5. Section 6 concludes and suggests the policy intervention.



2. Related Literature

The paper combines several strands of literature. The first strand is on the need of fiscal policy rules. Several papers have analyzed the impact of fiscal policy rule in the context of loose fiscal policy. Fiscal policy rule is defined as a rider on fiscal policy expressed in terms of a summary of fiscal performance, such as the budget deficit, borrowing, debt or a major component etc. (Kopits and Symansky, 1998). According to their research findings, loose fiscal policy impacts growth potential of the economy which in turn, destabilizes the economy. Therefore, there is a need for fiscal policy rule. High level of fiscal deficit relative to GDP results in increases in the debt-GDP ratio and also, adversely affects growth of the economy (Rangarajan & Srivastava, 2005). According to them, high and structural fiscal deficit constrain the fiscal policy for counter cyclical intervention, when the growth rate is below the trend level.

Implementation of fiscal rules at the subnational level of government is a fundamental challenge (Kopits, 2001). According to this study, the case for rules at the subnational level is particularly strong when a country, such as Brazil, is confronted with a major fiscal adjustment task that cannot be met by the central government alone. Similarly, in a federal system with a small central government, as in the EU, it is necessary to apply subnational rules so as to counter the moral hazard that may arise among subnational governments (or national governments in the EU) to incur fiscal imbalances with repercussions on the borrowing costs of the rest of the system.

Second, the paper is related to the literature on the importance of state level fiscal reforms for achieving the overall fiscal consolidation of the economy. The analysis by Vadra (2010) suggests that fiscal reforms at the

State Government level are critical to have higher growth trajectory in Indian economy. The Constitution assigns a pre-eminent role to States in India for agricultural development, poverty alleviation and human development and co-equal position in the provision of physical infrastructure. The predominant role in allocation and cooperative role in distribution makes States' fiscal operations critical for macroeconomic stabilization as well. Since the State Governments run large deficits, therefore, fiscal reforms at the State level critical for achieving overall fiscal consolidation in the economy. Hence, fiscal policy rules at the State level are important to achieve macroeconomic stability and micro-economic allocative efficiency. High fiscal deficit and unproductive revenue expenditure are the bottleneck for the economy to realize full growth potential. To have this economic growth sustainable with macroeconomic stability, prudent fiscal policy rule is a critical component (Economic Survey, 2007). Stephen, Lahiri and Nicholas (2003) in their study on State Finances emphasizes on the State level reforms in India. According to them India cannot succeed in reform process unless there is the State Governments bring in sound state finance with effective fiscal reforms. The fiscal crises at the state level need structural reform in order to remove fundamental weakness of the state finance (Amresh et al., 2002). The state should play complementary and supplementary role and performance to the efforts of the Centre to play and improve the fiscal situation (Bhargava, 2002). The fiscal policy should aim at raising the revenue of the states through levy of appropriate user charge on services, phasing out non merit subsidies, privatization of state electricity boards, rationalization of tax system by introduction of VAT (Rao, 1992). In a democratic society, rules are necessary to restrain political policy makers who pursue state finance policy in a deficit mode



when facing the electorates or they are indifferent to the inter temporal budget constraint (Buchanan & Wagner, 1887). More so, the rule based fiscal policy is superior to a discretionary approach (Kedland and Prescott, 1977). The state level fiscal reforms should play complementary and supplementary role and performance to the efforts of the Centre to play and improve the fiscal situation (Bhargava, 2002). The constraints on sub-national deficits must be stronger than those pertaining to the central government as largely, they borrow and make interest payment outside the state. The marginal cost and average cost of borrowing by the states are higher as compared to those for the centre, implying the need for more stringent norms for the same rates of growth of State Domestic Product (Chelliah 2001). The imbalances in the state budgets which are structural in character are the turning points for the fiscal deterioration in Indian public finance and impacts, India's overall fiscal sustainability (Anand et al, 2001). The deteriorating trend in state finances in recent years is because of failure to contain wasteful expenditure and reluctance to raise additional resources that afflicts most of the state finances. Competitive populism and the pay revision of employees led to starvation of funds of states, therefore, unless drastic measures are resorted to without delay finances of states will collapse (Kurian, 1999).

Finally, this study belongs to the literature which investigates pro-cyclical behaviour of the fiscal policy. Fiscal policy is pro-cyclical when it is expansionary during economic upturns and contractionary during economic downturns. Conversely, a countercyclical fiscal policy is contractionary during upturns and expansionary during downturn. The Pro-cyclical behaviour of the fiscal policy is evidenced in Latin American Countries, especially during periods of low growth (Gavin & Perotti, 1997). The requirement of funds

by the Government through borrowing is higher during the down turn that helps in explaining why fiscal policy is particularly pro-cyclical in economic downturn. To ensure medium-term fiscal sustainability, states should have deficit bias during economic downturns which should be offset by generating fiscal surpluses during upturns. However, most of the states have a tendency to adopt pro-cyclical fiscal policies during an upswing, which creates a deficit bias leading to accumulation of debt and high debt servicing (Lane, 2002). In India, a pro-cyclicality behavior in aggregate expenditure and GSDP is empirically observed for Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Kerala and Tamil Nadu (RBI: Study of State Budgets 2013-14). However, the capital outlay in these states does not exhibit any cyclicity. Counter-cyclicality behavior in aggregate expenditure and GSDP is empirically observed in case of Gujarat, M.P, Odisha, Punjab and Rajasthan. In this empirical analysis, it is found that states with more Primary balance with one period lag are found to have a significant positive impact on both capital outlay and primary revenue expenditure. This confirms that the states with lower primary deficit/higher primary surplus have more headroom for carrying out their fiscal expenditure. It is implied that containment of interest expenses is crucial for prudent expenditure management policy of the state finance. It is also empirically proved that during the election, there is pro-cyclicality in capital outlay of the states. This indicates that states tend to undertake higher capital outlays in the year prior to state elections. Capital expenditure increased in the year leading up to the elections; capital spending is widely regarded as a more convenient tool for political patronage of specific groups or individuals, since new construction contracts can be given selectively (Khemani, 2000). A similar empirical study is made which supports the fact that, in India, both at centre and



state, during the election year, elections significantly raise the fiscal deficit-to-GDP ratio (Suchitra, 2012). The fiscal decisions at the state level are essentially guided by the desire to maximize the length of their tenure by the parties in power and are not influenced by their ideological doctrines (Rao, 1992).

3. Research gap, objectives and methodology

The empirical analysis of our study contributes to the existing literature taking the State Finance of Odisha as case study. The Objective of this paper is to (a) identify the major changes which occurred in deficit management in Odisha State Finance during 1992-2001 by capturing the structural break in important fiscal variables, (b) examine the impact of FRBM Act on the Odisha's fiscal sector, (c) investigate the revenue and expenditure management policy of the state finance, (d) analyze the debt sustainability in terms of ability of the state to service interest payment and repayment of the debt when they become due through indicator analysis. To achieve the above objectives, the following methodology has been followed in the present study.

We have employed Simple Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method to investigate the impact of FRBM Act on fiscal balance. Revenue deficit to GSDP, Fiscal deficit to GSDP ratio, Primary deficit to GSDP ratio has been taken as the indicator of fiscal balance. The GSDP is taken at current prices. The impact of FRBM Act on these deficit ratios has examined by taking FRBM dummy. To provide a greater statistical validity, an attempt has been also been made to subject the full data to a test of whether or not there was any statistically significant structural break in any of these deficit variables.

Symbolically, the model can be written as:

$$\text{Deficit Ratio} = a_0 + a_1 D_1 + a_2 D_2(t-10) + ut \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where deficit ratio is dependent variable

D_1 (FRBM Dummy): Dummy variable which is '0' for 1992-93 to 2003-04

'1' for 2004-05 to 2012-13

t: time trend: 1 to 21 that starts from 1 (1992-93) and ends at 21 (2012-13)

D_2 (Time Dummy): dummy variable which is '0' for 1992-93 to 2001-02
'1' for 2002-03 to 2012-13

Here, FRBM dummy coefficient ' a_1 ' is used to examine the significance of the hypothesis that whether the enactment of FRBM since 2004-05 has brought the fiscal balance in terms of reduction in Deficit to GDP ratio in the period 2004-05 to 2012-13. ' a_2 ' is time dummy coefficient that gives the break in deficit ratios for the period 2002-03 to 2012-13.

To examine further the revenue and expenditure management policy of the state finance, we have fitted a time trend model using the ordinary least square method. The logarithm of these four fiscal variables are taken as dependent variable and fitted against the time trend to compute the growth pattern. The model is given below.

$$\text{Log}(Y) = a + bt$$

Where, Y is dependent variable and 't' takes value from 1 (1992-93) to 21 (2011-12). ' b ' is annual growth rate of these variables for the period 1992-93 to 2012-13.

The annual data spanning from 1980-81 to 2013-14 is sourced from Budget documents and Economic Survey (several issues) of the Government of Odisha.



4. Theoretical Background

The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Bill of 2000, is a landmark for sustainability for India's sound public finances. The bill sets fiscal policy rules that will require the Government to eliminate the both central and state revenue deficit ratio and targets a fiscal deficit ratio; put a cap on Government guarantee ratio and prevents the Government to borrow from the Reserve Bank of India effectively from 2004. Besides, the bill suggests annual submissions of Medium-Term Fiscal Policy (MTFP) for the respective states. The bill envisages transparency in the fiscal policy rules both for Centre and States. The Medium-Term Fiscal Reform Programmes (MTFRPs) aims at reducing wasteful expenditure (cutting low-priority spending) and improving tax collection or improving the efficiency of the tax administration. The MTFRPs required states to make time-bound reform in fiscal administration, power, public sector, and the budget and aimed at reducing the consolidated fiscal deficit to sustainable levels by 2005, as well as the debt-to-GDP ratio and interest payments.

The Twelfth Finance Commission (TFC) recommended the debt write-off scheme wherein a state can enact a fiscal responsibility law and try to eliminate revenue deficit and reduce fiscal deficit. Consequently, the debt write-off scheme was linked to the reduction of revenue deficit of the states. The Thirteenth Finance Commission has recommended that the interest rate on loans from the National Small Savings Fund (NSSF) to states only contracted till 2006–07 and outstanding as at the end of FY 2010 to be re-priced at 9 per cent. They have also recommended to write-off of Central loans to the states. This will be availed only by those states

who would legislate fiscal responsibility and budget management (FRBM) Acts as recommended by the Commission. In order to ensure, the fiscal prudence of the states, Government of India, in 2003, has introduced Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Acts.

Government of Odisha has been implementing a plan for restructuring public finances, through a combination of revenue enhancing and unproductive revenue expenditure reduction measures and debt restructuring efforts. The deficit on the revenue account has been reduced from Rs.2834 crore in 2001-02 to Rs.1421 crore in 2003-04. It declined to Rs.414 crore in 2004-05 and is budgeted at Rs.1091 crore in 2005-06. The medium-term target of Government is to reduce the revenue deficit to zero or less by 2008-09 as provided under section 5(a) of the Orissa Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2005 (FRBM Act, 2005).

The goal of reducing the Revenue Deficit to zero by 2008-09 is a commitment stipulated in the Orissa Fiscal Responsibility & Budget Management Act, 2005, which has come into force with effect from 14.6.2005. The enactment of this legislation makes Government of Odisha eligible for debt relief to the tune of Rs.1881.28 crore, through the consolidation of central loans contracted upto 31.3.2004 and outstanding as on 1.4.2005, according to the recommendations of the Twelfth Finance Commission.

Consistent reduction of revenue deficit and, containing the fiscal deficit to the level of 2004-05, Odisha has been entitled to a total debt write off of Rs.1751.29 from 2005-06 to 2009-10 in addition to debt relief of Rs.1881.28 crore



by way of consolidation of the past central loans and resetting the interest rate at 7.5% per annum on such rephased consolidated central loan contracted upto 31.3.2004.

The management of state finance in Odisha is guided by FRBM ACT, 2005 and the recommendation from successive finance commissions. The State Government has amended the FRBM Act, 2005 on the basis of recommendations of the 13th Finance Commission.

This empirical analysis based exclusively on secondary data for the period 1992-93 to 2012-13 is taken from the Economic Survey of Odisha, Budget documents of Govt. of Odisha and Reserve Bank of India report on “State Finances: A Study of Budgets of 2013-14”.

5. Results and Analysis

5.1 Structural Break in Deficit Variables

As depicted in Chart 2, Revenue Deficit, Fiscal Deficit and Primary Deficit relative to GSDP have deteriorated consistently from 1992-93 to 2001-02. Theses deficit ratios have started showing improvement since 2002-03.

The main task of this section is to identify the major changes which occurred in deficit management in Odisha State Finance over these periods. To supplement the information in the Chart 2, and to give the conclusions there from greater statistical validity, an attempt has also been made to subject the full data to a test of whether or not there was any statistically significant structural break in the deficit ratios. The impact of FRBM Act on deficit ratio has been examined through empirical method (equation 1). The empirical results of the model are given below in Table 1.

Table 1: Empirical result of the Structural Break and FRBM Act on Deficit Ratios

Sample: 1980-81 to 2013-14 observations: 35

	Explanatory Variables	
	FRBM Dummy a ₁	Time Dummy a ₂
Dependent Variables		
RDR	0.03	0.09%
<i>p value</i>	(0.03)	(0.04)
FDR	0.06	0.02%
<i>p value</i>	(0.00)	(0.02)
PDR	0.07	0.40%
<i>p value</i>	(0.00)	(0.00)

The study regress the Revenue Deficit Ratio (**RDR**), Fiscal Deficit Ratio (**FDR**) and Primary Deficit Ratio (**PDR**) on time dummy and FRBM dummy as described (equation 1) using Simple Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method.

The empirical analysis find out that the RDR, FDR and PDR have improved(declined) by 0.09%, 0.02% and 0.40% respectively on yearly basis in the period 2002-03 to 2012-13. The significance of the improvement in the fiscal balance is measured through ‘p value’ which has been less than 5% (0.05) for all the deficit indicators. Therefore, it is empirically established that there is a structural break in terms of improvement in fiscal balance since 2002-03. It is also established from the empirical analysis that FRBM Act does have a significant effect on the deficit ratio as the calculated (p) value which is less than the 5%(0.05). After the implementation of FRBM Act in 2004-05, the fiscal deficit indicators have started showing a declining trend.

The improvement in these three deficit indicators has been mainly due to compression in the total revenue expenditure. Total revenue



expenditure to GSDP ratio was at the peak of 18.25%, 19.11% and 18.27% in the year 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03 respectively. From 2003-04 to 2007-08, a consistent downward trend has been witnessed in revenue expenditure ratio. It has recorded a low of 13.71% in 2007-08. The trend is reversed since 2008-09. The recorded revenue expenditure ratio of 14.27% in 2008-09 has gone up very moderately to a level of 14.97% in 2012-13. However, there is a jump to 17.91% in 2013-14. The driving factor for the declining trend in revenue expenditure ratio is decreased in expenditure on salary and interest payment expenses. The expenditure on salary relative to GSDP was at the peak of 8.12% in 1999-00 has been consistently declining till 2013-14 except for the year 2009-10 and 2010-11. It recorded a low of 3.72% in 2012-13 because of the pay revision of salary on the basis of the recommendation of 6th Central Pay Commission. The interest payment relative to GSDP was at the peak of 5.48% in 2001-02 has started a declining trend with a low of 1.10% in 2012-13. Revenue Expenditure management by compressing the expenses on salary and interest payment has been the strategy for prudent management of the state finance (Chart 3). The expenditure due to Pension which is one of the components of revenue expenditure, in fact, has recorded upward trend from 1.44% in 2000-01 to 2.33% in 2013-14.

Though, capital outlay relative to GSDP has been compressed from 1.96 % in 2002-03 to 1.43% in 2006-07, it grew up gradually since 2007-08 from 2.20% to 2.72% at the end of 2013-14 as compared to national average of 2.4% for non-special category states during these years.

5.2 Revenue and Expenditure Management

To examine the pattern of total revenue receipts(TRR), total expenditure(TE), total revenue expenditure(TRE) and capital outlay (CO) for the period 1992-93 to 2012-13, we have taken 1992-93 (=100) as base year for these variables. It is evident that the pattern of TE and TRE is almost similar as the compression in growth of TE is mainly driven by compression in growth of TRE. The negative gap between TRR and TRE has reversed in favor of positive gap (total revenue receipt is more than total revenue expenditure) in 2005-06 and the average magnitude of the positive gap has been 1.85% relative to GSDP during 2005-06 to 2013-14. There has been acceleration in growth of capital outlay in post 2006-07 accompanied by widening positive revenue gap relative to GSDP. This further establishes the fact that the expenditure management policy of the state has not at the cost of capital outlay rather boosting the capital outlay.

To examine further the revenue and expenditure management policy of the state finance, we have fitted a time trend model using the ordinary least square method. The logarithm of these four fiscal variables are taken as dependent variable and fitted against the time trend to compute the growth pattern. The model is given below.

$$\text{Log}(Y) = a + bt$$

Where, Y is dependent variable and ' t ' takes value from 1 (1992-93) to 21 (2013-14). ' b ' is compound annual average growth rate(CAGR) of these variables for the period 1992-93 to 2013-14. The results of this time trend model are given below.

**Table 2: Results of Time Trend Model**

Dependent Variables	Explanatory Variables			
	CAGR		CAGR	
log(TRR)		13.93%	log(CO)	12.24%
<i>p value</i>	(0.000)		<i>p value</i>	(0.000)
<i>t' ratio</i>	31.98 (1% significance level)		<i>t' ratio</i>	9.58 (1% significance level)
log(TE)		12.28%	log(GSDP)	12.44%
<i>p value</i>	(0.000)		<i>p value</i>	(0.000)
<i>t' ratio</i>	36.45 (1% significance level)		<i>t' ratio</i>	29.60 (1% significance level)
log(TRE)		13.33%		
<i>p value</i>	(0.000)			
<i>t' ratio</i>	28.39 (1% significance level)			

It is seen from the Table 2, during 1992-93 to 2013-14, total expenditure has grown at 12.28%. This growth is contributed by 13.33% growth in revenue expenditure and 12.24% growth in capital outlay. The growth in capital expenditure has not changed significantly between pre & post 2003-04. But, the growth in revenue expenditure in post 2003-04 is much lower than pre 2003-04. As a result, the total expenditure is controlled to grow at 12.28%. The total revenue receipt grew annually almost at 14% level which managed to create a positive revenue gap. The annual growth in nominal GSDP during these years has been 12.44% which exhibits a similar growth rate in total expenditure. Therefore, total expenditure to GSDP ratio remained at same level with corresponding rise in total revenue to GSDP ratio.

To reduce the deficit level of the state, the compression and rationalisation of revenue expenditure which are not economically productive and at the same time, by boosting the

volume of capital outlay(higher capital outlay to GSDP ratio) which has multiplier effect on GSDP, has resulted in higher growth in GSDP. This proves the effective and prudent management of state finance in Odisha.

5.3 Debt Management

The focus of this section is to study the pattern of debt variables i.e. outstanding debt and debt servicing ratio. We have taken outstanding debt to GSDP ratio as debt ratio and interest payment to revenue receipt ratio as debt servicing ratio. This study has attempted to examine the structural break and the impact of enactment of FRBM Act on outstanding debt to GSDP ratio and payment of interest to revenue receipt ratio.

A downward break is noticed in debt servicing ratio in 2001-02 and debt ratio in 2002-03. We have used the same model discussed in section 3 to empirically establish the structural break and the impact of FRBM Act.

$$\text{Debt Ratio} = a_0 + a_1 D_1(t - 10)$$



$$\text{Debt Service Ratio} = a_2 + a_3 D_2(t - 9)$$

Where debt and debt service ratio is dependent variable

t: time trend from '1' to 21'

Which starts from 1 (1992-93) and ends at 21 (2012-13)

D₁: dummy variable which is
'0' for 1992-93 to 2001-02
'1' for 2002-03 to 2012-13

D₂: dummy variable which is
'0' for 1992-93 to 1999-00
'1' for 2001-02 to 2012-13

Here **a₁** and **a₂** are structural dummy coefficient that gives the break in debt ratio and debt servicing ratio deficit ratios for the period 2003-04 to 2012-13 and 2002-03 respectively. The normal '*p*' test and 't' test on the break coefficient **a₁** and **a₂** is used to examine the significance of the hypothesis that there was a break in both debt and debt servicing ratio.

Table 2: Structural Break in Debt Variables

Explanatory Variables		
Time Dummy		
Dependent Variables		
DR	a₁	-1.60%
	<i>p value</i>	(0.004)
	<i>t' ratio</i>	-5.23 (1% significance level)
DSR	a₂	-1.45%
	<i>p value</i>	(0.0003)
	<i>t' ratio</i>	-4.38 (1% significance level)

The empirical analysis proves that a downward structural has happened in case of

outstanding debt to GSDP ratio in 2002-03 and debt servicing ratio in 2001-02. The break is statistically significant in terms of both '*t*' ratio and '*p*' value. The outstanding debt ratio has witnessed an annual decline of 1.60% since 2002-03 and debt service ratio has shown a yearly decline of 1.45% since 2001-02.

The Debt ratio of the state was at the peak of 55.35% as on year ending 2002-03 as against all States average of 34.21%. Prepayment of high cost debt and debt swap has been the policy for debt management of the state. From 2002-03 to 2007-08, the state has managed debt swap amounting to Rs.3295 crores on which the debt service ratio has declined by Rs.183 cr. The debt ratio stands at 19.83% which is very impressive as against national average of 21.70% as on year ending 2012-13. The debt service relative to revenue receipt is reported at 10.56% which is much lower than the national average of 12.20%. In fact, rate of growth of GSDP exceeds the effective interest payment rate by 9.5% as compared to 8.2% witnessed in national level during 2010-11 to 2012-13³. This proves the prudent debt management policy in the state finance. The State Government also has not gone for open market borrowing since 2006-07 as a result, net addition to the debt stock has been contained and debt service burden has further been reduced. As part of the liability management, the state has reduced the contingent liability relative to revenue receipt ratio drastically to 12.20% as on December, 2012 as compared to 12.8% recorded as on year ending 2001-02. Consolidated Sinking Fund has been created to amortization of open market borrowing.

6. Summary, Conclusion and Policy Prescription

Post 2002-03 and, after the implementation of FRBM Act, it has been



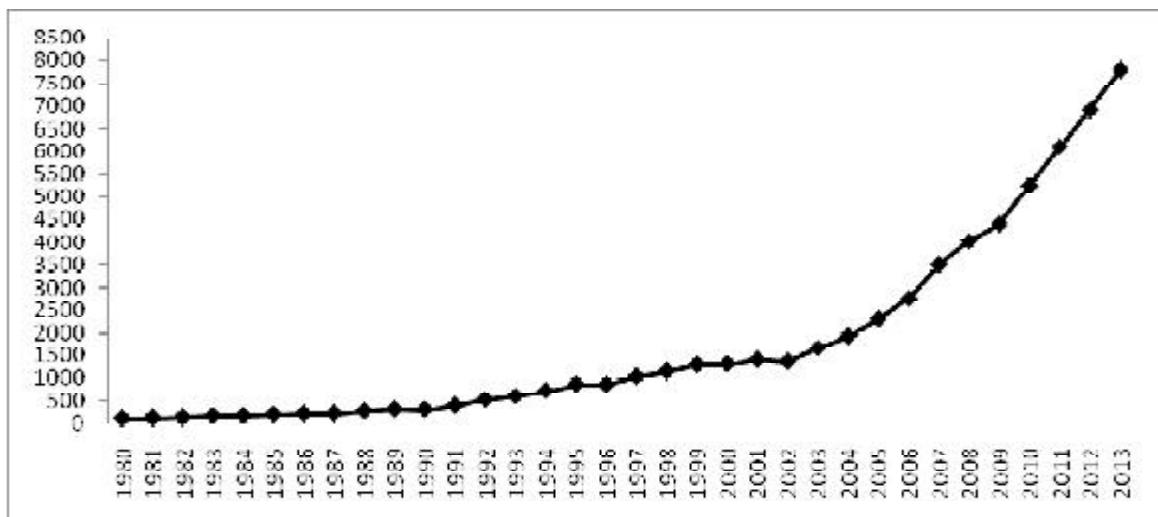
empirically proved that the State is managing its finance prudently as key fiscal deficit indicators have shown a declining trend. The improvement is mainly due to revenue expenditure cut. It can be observed that capital expenditure has not been affected. As part of the rationalization of expenditure, expenses on account of salary, pension and interest payments have declined significantly. The prudent management of state finance has taken care of capital expenditure as it is a major indicator of growth and priority has been given for increasing this expenditure rather than cutting it off in the fiscal consolidation process. Target variables have been chosen very prudently in such a way that capital spending has not suffered during the course of fiscal consolidation. As a result, the higher growth rate in GSDP is witnessed in post 2003-04 and the growth in GSDP in last few years in the state has been more than many advanced states. It is empirically established that the management of state finance has been very efficient and effective as compared to other states in India.

In our empirical analysis, FRBM Act has been proved as an important development in managing States finances but this improvement may not be sustainable because mere implementation of FRBM Act cannot ensure the sustainability of fiscal consolidation as further improvement is required in terms of target variable, in terms of coverage, in terms of procedure and transparency.

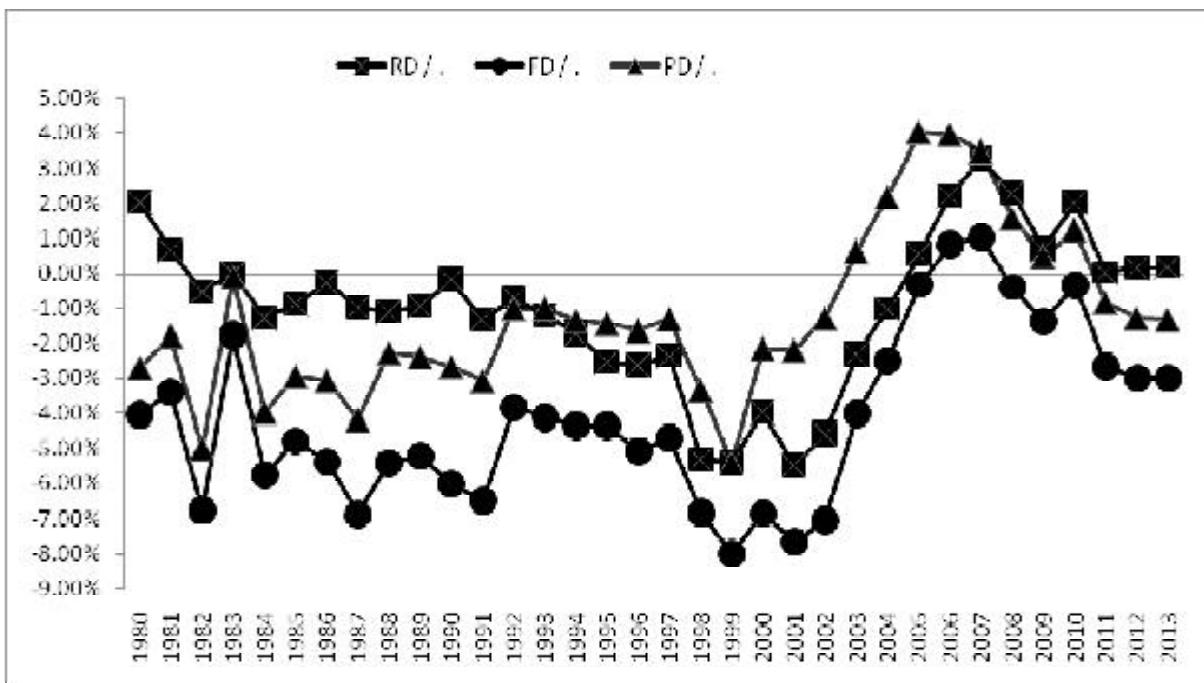
Because of debt swapping scheme and prepayment of high cost outstanding market borrowing, both debt and debt service ratio have declined phenomenally. Odisha being one of the top states in terms of both debt ratio and debt servicing ratio in 2002-03 has become one of the lowest states in terms of debt and debt servicing ratio as on year ending 2012-13. This proves the

prudent debt management policy of the state. As part of the liability management, the contingent liability ratio has also come to a lowest level.

On the basis of recommendations of the 13th Finance Commission, the State Government has amended the FRBM Act, 2005. In tune with the FRBM (Amendment) Act, 2011, the state has to adhere to revenue surplus and the ceiling of fiscal deficit ratio at 3% level. Odisha is a revenue surplus state with fiscal deficit ratio at 3% level, however, it will not be easy to monitor the mechanism on implementation of FRBM Act in the context of slowdown in global economy. Because of increasing economic and financial integration, the trade, finance and commerce have adversely affected the growth trajectory of our Country and our State. In our state the growth rate in real GSDP has decelerated to 7.2% level in 2011-12. In order to adhere to the FRBM Act (Amendment), the state need to grow at least at 10% level in real terms and 15% in nominal terms. Otherwise, further compression of revenue expenditure will be required. To achieve growth rate at this level, the productivity of capital and the volume of capital expenditure is very crucial. Capital expenditure through Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode in creating capital assets and generation of income by augmenting the capital productivity should be the policy intervention. There is ample scope for investment through private sector participation because of the continuing good governance in the state. Besides, the tax efficiency of the state in terms of tax to GSDP ratio is at 5.92% in 2012-13 which is lower than the national average of 7.4% for non-special category states. The investment through PPP route and higher capital outlay will augment the tax efficiency of the state during GST regime.

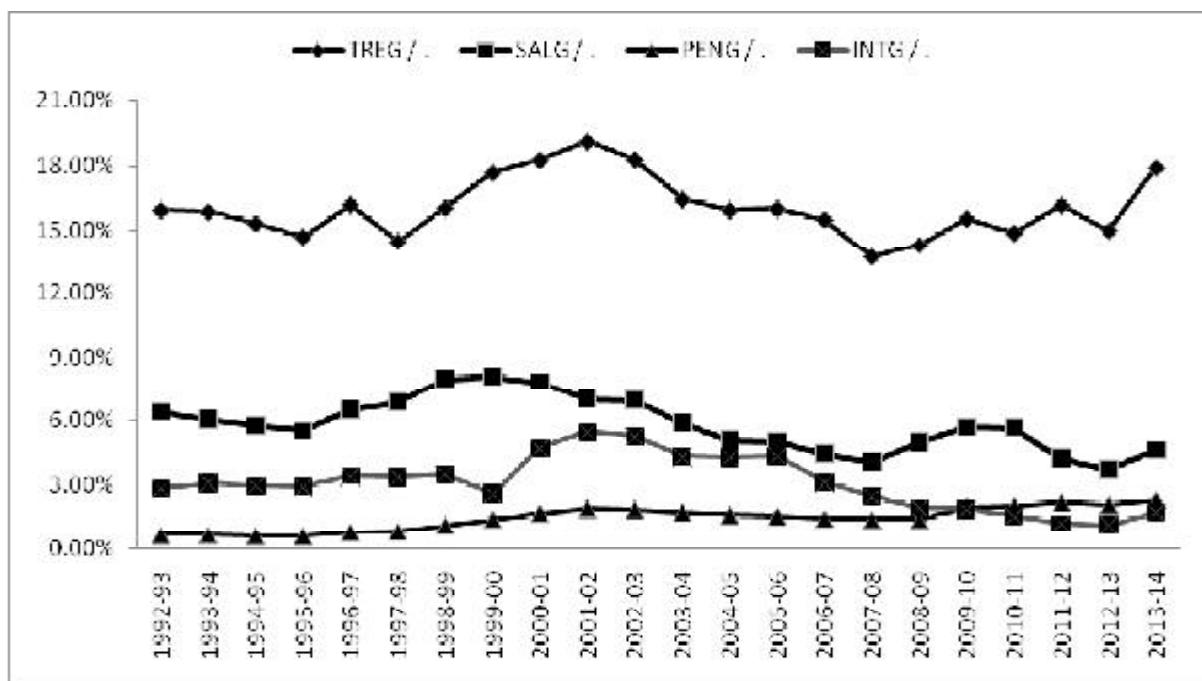
**Chart 1: Index of Nominal GSDP in Odisha 1980-81 to 2013-14 (with 1980-81=100)**

Source: Budget Documents and Economic Survey (several issues), Govt. of Odisha.

Chart 2: Trend in Deficit Ratios: 1980-81 to 2013-14

Source: Budget Documents and Economic Survey (several issues), Govt. of Odisha.

RD: Revenue Deficit, FD: Fiscal Deficit, PD: Primary Deficit

**Chart 3: Trends of Revenue Expenditure Relative to GSDP**

TREG: Total Revenue Expenditure Relative to GSDP, SALG: Salary Expenditure Relative to GSDP, PENG: Pension Expenses Relative to GSDP, INTG: Interest Payment Relative to GSDP

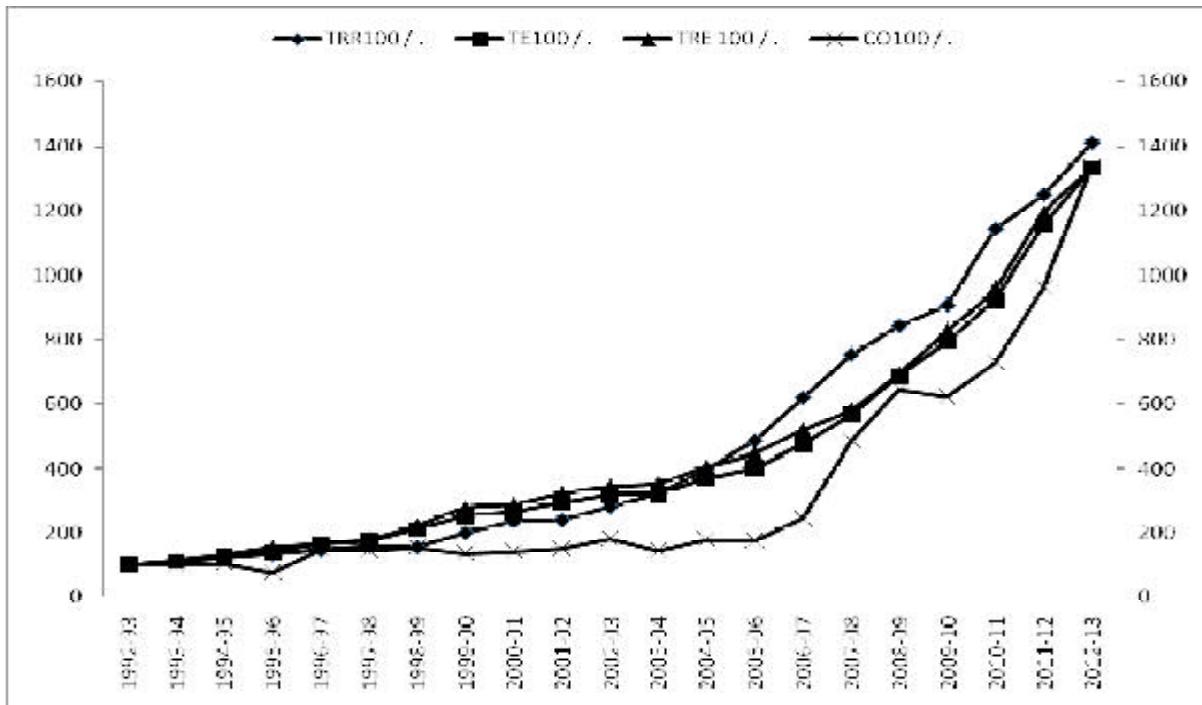
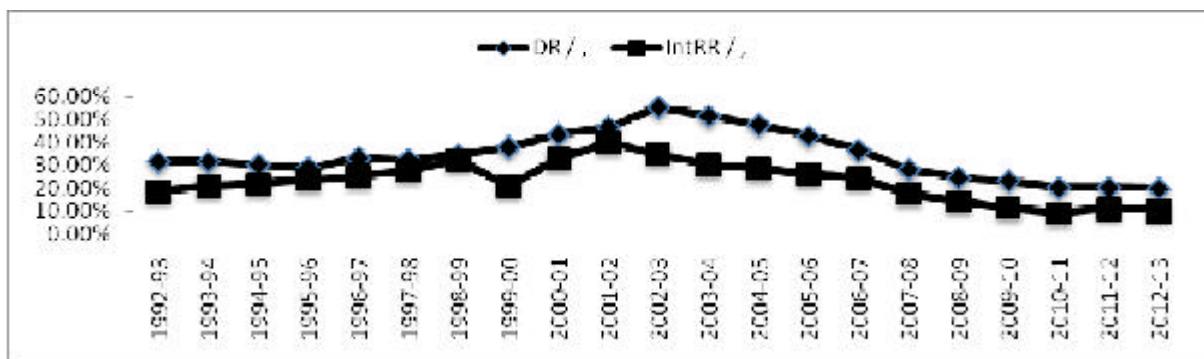
Chart 4: Trend in Revenue and Expenditure: 1992-93: 2012-13



Chart 5: Trend in Debt and Debt Servicing Ratio



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Raghu Arakshita and Sri Jagannath

Dinabandhu Pradhan

If the all merciful Lord extends protection to anybody, none can do any harm to such a person. With the Lord's mercy showered upon him, he is adored as an illustrious divine being, well-protected under his shelter. Saints say that the Lord and His devotees are always one and inseparable. God is therefore called Bhakta-Bachhala. He is also worshipped as Bhaktachintamani. The devotees sometimes call Him Bhakta-Banchha-Kalpataru.

For the well-being of the sages and the saints in Tretaya Yug, God had appeared on earth in the divine form of Sri Ram. For protection of His devotees, He had faced innumerable difficulties and hardships in life. He fought off the evil forces like Ravana and killed him and his entire retinue of demons. He thus helped His devotees and restored them against the evil forces.

Raghu Arakhit was one such devotee of Lord Jagannath in Kali Yug. The Lord had saved him from myriad troubles. At every critical situation, Raghu had received the mercy of the Lord. The Lord was the avenger of all the evils of his life. At every stage, he had surrendered himself at the lotus feet of the Lord and sought His blessings.

Raghu was born in the sacred Banga land. He was born in a very good and noble family. His father was one Krishna Chandra Mahapatra by name and a Kshatriya by caste. Krishna Chandra Mahapatra was a philanderer and, in actual spirit, a pious person always apt to help the destitute and the downtrodden of the society. He always



thought good of others. Raghu's mother was similarly a pious woman. She was Kamala Devi by name. Both Krishna Mahapatra and Kamala Devi were great devotees of Lord Jagannath. Kamala Devi loved her husband as God in the human form. Raghu was also a worshipper of Lord Jagannath. Like his father, he found immense



pleasure in serving the needy persons of his village. His ideology was to render good services to mankind as service to God.”

As time passed by, there broke out a famine in his area. The villagers were engulfed by the miseries of the worst time of the village and its surrounding. Many died of acute hunger. At last, Raghu’s father came to the rescue of the needy persons. He opened a free-kitchen for distribution of cooked food among the starving poor men. That was otherwise a unique arrangement necessary at that time irrespective of caste, creed and religion. That displayed the unselfish love and enthusiasm of Raghu’s father. A large number of people were thus somehow saved. The famine passed away in course of time. But Raghu’s father was reduced to the position of an absolute pauper. After some days, he was afflicted by an incurable malady. Knowing well that he was not going to live long, he got his son married to the daughter of the ‘Karanam’ of the neighbouring Zamindari. She was Annapurna by name. Some days after Raghu’s marriage, Krishna Mahapatra breathed his last. His mother too died jumping into his father’s funeral pyre. Thus both his father and mother died on one and the same day. Raghu was turned into an orphan. From then onwards, Raghu was known in the name of Raghu Arakhit. He became a destitute like the other destitute in his area.

The sad occurrence was a great shock to Annapurna’s father known as Gangadhara ‘Karana’. He had never expected such a plight of life for Raghunatha, his son-in-law. Raghunatha, on the other hand, had his own pride and self-respect as the son of Krushna Chandra Mahapatra. Needless to say, he hailed from an established family of the area. So following the debacle he faced, he did not like to go to his father-in-law’s house. He preferred to stay in his

own village depending on the support of his neighbours who had been greatly helped by his father during the famine. Instead, he sent his wife to her father’s house.

One-day, Raghu had a good dream at night. He had the splendid experience of some divine soul telling him in kind words that after the death of his parents, his abode had shifted to Puri and he should proceed to Srikshetra without any loss of time. The Lord would take care of his life and he would spend his time in Bhajan and Kirttan in the company of the Baishnabs in the Ananda Bazar of the grand temple. When Raghu got up the next morning in the solitary house, he had however a big urge in his mind and that impelled him to proceed to Puri as that was the wish of his Lord.

A day after he set out in his journey to Srikshetra in the company other devotees who were on their way to Puri. He did not inform anybody in the neighbourhood about his programme while leaving his village. He did not inform even his wife, let alone his father-in-law. After some-days, he reached Puri. Smearing the dust of the grand-road all over his body, he straightway proceeded to the temple of his Lord in high ecstasy. He felt as if he had finally reached his spiritual home and he was under the care of his Lord. He sincerely hoped that all his sufferings would be soon over. He entered the temple and had the ‘darshan’ of the divine deities. He felt as if the Lord was saying, “Raghu, it is good that you have at last come to me. I was awaiting you in the grand temple. May you now stay here with me and spend your time doing ‘Kirttan’ in the temple. You will get your Prasad in Ananda Bazar.”

However the news about Raghu having finally arrived at Puri reached his father-in-law in no time. His father-in-law and others including



Annapurna who got the news were very much worried. The father-in-law of Raghu decided to give her daughter in marriage to some other better person. His mother-in-law was also one with her husband's decision. But Annapurna had no such feeling in her mind. She however could not oppose her parents. Sitting at a corner of the house, she shed tears and only prayed to God for blessing her with strength of mind. She expressed her feelings to the maid servant of the house. She was her confident person. She had brought up Annapurna on her lap in her childhood days. The maid servant confided to Annapurna that she would proceed to Puri as if she was interested to go there to have the 'darshan' of Sri Jagannath. She would somehow try to meet Raghunath and explain to him the circumstances under which his wife was spending her time. She would also reveal the mind of his father-in-law. She would request him to return to his father-in-law's village and rescue his wife from the clutches of her father. Annapurna wrote a personal letter to her husband and gave the letter to the maid servant .A few days after, the maid servant set out to Puri in the company of other pilgrims. Annapurna's father could not know the plan of her daughter.

After some days, the maid servant found Raghu in the Anand Bazar. She handed over to him Annapurna's letter. She also told him that if he delayed in rescuing his wife, her father might give her in marriage to the son of the village-officer of the neighbouring Zamindari. Hearing the details from the maid servant, Raghu was very much disturbed in his mind. Taking the blessings of his Lord, he soon proceeded to Annapurna's place without further delay.

Raghu's arrival in his father-in-law's house surprised one and all in the village. Annapurna's father was certainly un-happy. But he did not

express his anxiety lest others in the area should misunderstand him. Annapurna was a clever woman. She had smelled the rat in her father's activities. She passed on the information to Raghu that he should be very careful about his life. While taking his food in her house, he should remain alert to the surrounding as her parents were conspiring to give him poison any time.

Raghu was least worried. He had utmost confidence in his Lord. The next day evening after his arrival, when he sat down to take his food, his wife gave out an indication to him about the crooked conspiracy of her father. Raghu as usual offered his food to God that had been mixed with poison. Thereafter, he took his food as the 'Prasad' of Lord Jagannath, shorn of any sort of anxiety in his mind. The result was that groaning under acute pain, he was senseless. He fell stretching himself flat on the floor. Everybody in the house thought that Raghu was dead & gone. Annapurna however was praying to Lord Jagannath.

The news about the unusual happening soon spread all over the village; Raghu's father-in- law gave an understanding to the people that Raghu had a snake-bite the previous night and so he breathed his last. But Annapurna was crying and praying to God. Annapurna knew the truth. At last the Lord listened to her prayer. After some time, she saw an aura of divine resplendence by the side of Raghu's body. The Lord was present there. And Raghu had got back his senses. All present were taken aback. Raghu's father-in-law could not believe his eyes. Everybody had thought that Raghu was dead. But Raghu had simply lost his senses. He had lost his consciousness. The Maya Purush had created 'maya'(delusion) at that time. And it was beyond everybody's comprehension. It was true that everything was alright and nothing serious had happened to



Raghu. But Annapurna was seriously disturbed in her mind. She had known the mind of her father. He was conspiring to give her in marriage to another able person and he, in his mind, had also selected the new-bride groom. Raghu's illness however had checkmated her father's conspiratorial plans. But he had not abstained from his revengeful attitude. He still harbored plans to end the life of Raghu.

Raghu was terribly suffocated in his father-in-laws house. Annapurna too seriously wanted an escape from her house. Both of them now wanted to proceed to Puri and eke out their living there. Initially, Raghu wanted to leave the house of his father's-in-law alone. But Annapurna persuaded him to take her with him to Puri.

The next morning, Raghu went to his father-in-law and sought his permission to leave the house for Puri. He also expressed his mind to take his wife with him. Seeing Raghu's determination, he had no other alternative than to agree to his decision. He gave Raghu and his wife the required permission.

Now it was Annapurna's mother who played the mischief in the entire scheme of things against her son-in-law and daughter. She stealthily informed the boy whom she had selected as his son- in-law about Raghu's plan to proceed to Puri with his wife. She requested him to somehow rescue her daughter from Raghu's company to carry out the plan of marriage with him in future. She revealed to him all the detailed information about Raghu and the direction in which he had set off to Puri.

Now the boy & his ruffian friends proceeded on the way to Puri in the direction of Raghu and Annapurna. Annapurna somehow got the smell of their entire plan. She informed Raghu that her mother had hatched a plan to kill him on

way to Puri. And she had sent the ruffians who were following them behind to carry out the evil plan. Raghu heard the entire story. He looked back and saw the ruffians. They were coming with swords in their hands. Raghu cared a fig for the ruffians. He marched ahead with his wife as if nothing had come to their notice. He was however praying to the Lord. He was singing Bhajans in the usual manner.

It appeared to Raghu that the entire happening was a big miracle going around them. Raghu saw at a distance that two strong youths fully armed were coming towards them as if to save them from the plight. Seeing them at a distance, the ruffians got panicky, changed their direction, and chased the two youths. The ruffians were however crushed in no time.

Raghu and his wife were thus saved. The two youths appeared before them and blessed them with long life and prosperity. They also said to the couple to proceed to their destination without any further fear.

Who were these two youths? Raghu pondered over the miracle. Could they be Sri Balabhadra and Sri Jagannath? Raghu asked the question to himself, 'Am I so great as to enlist the intervention of the two Lords in our case?' Raghu could not conceive of any such divine happening.

The two youths were actually the two Lords of the Grand Temple. They were Sri Balabhadra and Sri Jagannath. They had come to that place to save Raghu and his wife from the great danger.

Now that the impediments had been overcome, Raghu and his wife proceeded towards Puri hale and hearty. There was no further danger. They sang Bhajans on the way. They could not know the hardship of walking on the rough road leading to Puri.



After some days, they reached Puri safe and sound. At first Annapurna could not believe her eyes. She had never seen Puri before. Both of them smeared the dust of the grand road on their foreheads. They saw the sacred flag fluttering at the Nilachakra of the grand temple as if welcoming them to Srikshetra. Next they went inside the temple and had the darshan of the Lords.

When they came to their senses, they thought about the place where they would spend their time. Initially they spent their days on the grand road. Annapurna had brought with her, some money and ornaments from her house. She had kept them hidden in her small bundle of cloths. Now she told Raghunath all about her personal possessions. She requested Raghunath to purchase a small house with the money she had brought with her from her house.

Raghu followed her instructions. They purchased a small house behind the grand temple and settled down there.

Time rolled on as it waits for none. One-day seven Baishnavas came to their house and begged "Bhiksha" for that day. Annapurna was greatly disturbed in her mind. But Raghunath came to her rescue and said, 'Annu, it is our good fortune that the Baishnavs have come to our house, seeking Bhikhya for the day. The Lord Who has sent them to our house will take care of the requirements. We are merely cogs in the machine. Tell them 'yes' and request them to come to our house at 1 pm after taking their bath. They shall take their Prasad in our house'.

Annapurna informed them accordingly. She took out the ornaments. She showed them to Raghu and requested him to sell them out in the market to purchase the required things to prepare food for the Baishnavs.

Raghu had no attachment for anything in his life. He appreciated his wife for her commendable foresight. He thanked her for her suggestion. But Raghu said, 'Anu, you are really very great in everything. I have one thing to say to you in this regard. If I take the ornaments to the market, people will say that I have stolen them from somewhere; they may snatch away the ornaments from my possession and also punish me for the ornaments. You should therefore carry the ornaments to the market and sell them in the shop of the gold-merchant. There will be no objection from the side of any person. Annapurna obeyed her husband. She agreed to his proposal. She went with the ornaments to the gold-merchant's shop. But, lo and behold, the gold-merchant she contacted was a different type of person. Seeing Annapurna, the gold merchant said, 'Hey, the most beautiful woman, why should you sell your ornaments? They are necessary for a beautiful woman like you. Keep them in your possession. You may take from me as much money as you like. But, for that you will have to spend one night with me.'"

This was quite shocking to Annapurna. She could not believe her ears. She thought to herself, "How people at Puri could be so cruel and disdainful in their behaviour?".

She immediately left the shop without uttering a single word further. At home; she narrated the details of the occurrence to Raghunath. Raghunath did not feel agitated. He said to his wife, 'My dear, listen, this is the go of the world. They are rich persons of the society. They can afford to do anything they like. The sacredness of the place is not important to them. We cannot displease the Vaishnabs under any circumstance. Please agree to what the gold merchant says to you. Have faith in your Lord in a spirit of surrender at His lotus feet. Please see



that the gold merchant gives us the money under any circumstance.”

Annapurna listened to Raghunath and at last decided to contact the gold merchant in his shop again. And she did so as planned out by her.

The gold merchant was very happy after seeing Annapurna. He gave her the required money. Annapurna said that she would contact him at her house at night.

With the money she earned, she and Raghu entertained the Vaishnabs. They were very happy. They blessed them with a prosperous spiritual career. At night that day, Annapurna went to the gold merchant’s house as promised. How could the poor merchant know that Annapurna was a great devotee of the Lord ? The gold-merchant looked at Annapurna in lustful eyes. Lo and behold, the moment he proceeded towards her, he felt weak and crippled. For a moment, he

lost his voice. He saw around Annapurna’s head a halo of light that was entirely divine. The gold merchant trembled in great fear. Annapurna on the other hand was very calm and muttering the name of the Lord. When the merchant came down to him in full sense, he prostrated before Annapurna’s feet and begged her pardon for his lustful behaviour.

Raghunath had accompanied his wife to the gold-merchant’s house. He was astonished to see his wife in her divine appearance. Tears of happiness rolled down his checks as he observed the divine surrounding. Raghu was grateful to his Lord. Even today, the name of Raghu glitters in golden letters as an ardent devotee of Lord Jagannath in the history of Jagannath religion.

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Chariot

The chariot
a momentum
a force
a movement towards
eternity spirituality.

Chariot
Comes and returns
somethings happen
Again soul comes and goes
to permanent a code.
God clonches the chariot



Dr. Kishore

Chariot is nothing a human body
with soul
meets the supersoul.

To get peace
the solace in life
Chariot moves on the path
guiding by the super power
the Almighty.

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