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The Lion's Gate of ShreeMandir (Simha Dwar)



ShreeMandir Paschima Dwar (Tiger Gate)

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No. 600 /GO dated the 15th June, 2024

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

Governor of Odisha, Shri Raghubar Das, on the advice of Chief Minister, Odisha, Shri Mohan Charan Majhi has assigned the portfolios among the newly appointed Ministers in the following manner. The total number of Ministers including the Chief Minister in the Council of Ministers is well within the prescribed limit as per Article 164(1A) of the Constitution of India.

Chief Minister:

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|----|---|
| 1. | Shri Mohan Charan Majhi | -- | Home
General Administration and Public
Grievance
Finance
Information & Public Relations
Water Resources
Planning & Convergence
Any other Department not specifically
assigned |
|----|-------------------------|----|---|

Deputy Chief Ministers:

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|----|--|
| 2. | Shri Kanak Vardhan Singh
Deo | -- | Agriculture and Farmers'
Empowerment
Energy |
| 3. | Smt. Pravati Parida | -- | Women and Child Development
Mission Shakti
Tourism |

Cabinet Ministers:

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|----|---|
| 4. | Shri Suresh Pujari | -- | Revenue & Disaster Management |
| 5. | Shri Rabi Narayan Naik | -- | Rural Development
Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water |
| 6. | Shri Nityananda Gond | -- | School & Mass Education
ST & SC Development, Minorities &
Backward Classes Welfare
Social Security & Empowerment of
Persons with Disabilities |

Contd.....P/2

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- | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|----|--|
| 7. | Shri Krushna Chandra Patra | -- | Food Suppliers & Consumer Welfare
Science & Technology |
| 8. | Shri Prithviraj Harichandan | -- | Law
Works
Excise |
| 9. | Dr. Mukesh Mahaling | -- | Health and Family Welfare
Parliamentary Affairs
Electronics & Information Technology |
| 10. | Shri Bibhuti Bhushan Jena | -- | Commerce & Transport
Steel & Mines |
| 11. | Dr. Krushna Chandra
Mahapatra | -- | Housing & Urban Development
Public Enterprises |

Ministers of State (Independent Charge):

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|----|---|
| 12. | Shri Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia | -- | Forest, Environment and Climate
Change
Labour & Employees State Insurance |
| 13. | Shri Suryabanshi Suraj | -- | Higher Education
Sports & Youth Services
Odia Language Literature & Culture |
| 14. | Shri Pradeep Bal Samanta | -- | Co-operation
Handlooms, Textiles & Handicrafts |
| 15. | Shri Gokulananda Mallik | -- | Fisheries & Animal Resources
Development
Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises |
| 16. | Shri Sampad Chandra Swain | -- | Industries
Skill Development & Technical
Education |

(Saswat Mishra)
Principal Secretary to the Governor
Odisha

People's Chief Minister Chairs First Cabinet Meeting; Approves 4 Key Proposals

First Council of Ministers and Cabinet Meeting of the New Government Headed by the Chief Minister.

- ▶ Opening of the Four Gates of ShreeMandir.
- ▶ Rs. 500 Crore Corpus Fund for the Development of ShreeMandir.
- ▶ Introduction of 'Samruddha Krushak Neeti' for Empowerment of the Farmers; Enhancement of the Minimum Support Price of Paddy to Rs. 3100/- per quintal.
- ▶ Voucher of Rupees 50 thousand to Women under Subhadra Yojana.

After taking oath, Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Mohan Charan Majhi presided over the first Council of Ministers and Cabinet meeting at Lok Seva Bhawan and approved four important proposals.

Briefing the Media, in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Shri Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, Deputy Chief Minister Smt. Pravati Parida and other Members of the Cabinet, Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Majhi said that the decisions are taken considering the various issues of Odisha's more than four and a half crore people. As per the resolution of the Bharatiya Janata Party, the State Cabinet has approved 4 proposals.

**The Resolution will be implemented
within 100 days.**

According to the decisions, the four doors of the ShreeMandir to be opened on 13th June morning during the Mangala Aalati of Mahaprabhu. Four doors will be opened in the presence of the Members of the State Council of Ministers keeping in mind the sentiments and convenience of the devotees and pilgrims. The Chief Minister said that the devotees and pilgrims were facing a lot of problem due to the closure of the three gates of the 12th century shrine for the past few years. This has created a gap between the devotees and the Lord. This gap will be bridged by opening of four gates.

According to the second decision, the State Government will soon arrange a corpus fund of Rs. 500 crore for the improvement, preservation, development and solution of other problems of the ShreeMandir.

The third decision is meant for empowerment of the farmer brothers and sisters. The Government will implement a 'Samruddha Krushak Neeti' for the farmers of the State and increase the Minimum Support Price of paddy to Rs. 3,100 per quintal as promised to the farmers. Instructions have been given to the concerned Department and it will be implemented within the next 100 days.

According to the fourth decision, "Subhadra Yojana" will be implemented to empower the women and improve their economic status. Under this scheme, women will be given a voucher of Rs. 50,000. The Chief Minister said that the concerned Departments have been instructed to prepare guidelines for implementation of the said schemes within the next 100 days.

Editor's Note



Car festival is the most famous festival of Lord Jagannath, which is celebrated every year in the month of June/July. Car festival in which millions congregate is a great messenger of friendship and solidarity.

Many books, articles and poems have been published in Odisha from time to time about this ancient historical event. The Odisha Government's monthly magazines 'Odisha Review' and 'Utkal Prasanga' are being published since 1944. But the Ratha Jatra Edition of both the issues which have been publishing regularly since 1967, has created a niche in the hearts of the writers and readers worldwide.

Lord Jagannath transcends all the trivialities of human made barriers like caste, creed, religion, region, gender, impairment and political affiliation etc. The message of unity among diversity rings loud and clear. All the articles in this edition of the Odisha Review are about Lord Jagannath. The writers offer devotional offerings to Lord Jagannath through articles and poems.

Articles and poems by eminent writers from different regions are published in this 2024 special Rath Jatra edition. On the occasion of the Ratha Jatra, we have the honour of offering this edition to the esteemed readers.

Lord Jagannath is the revered deity of millions of hearts all over the world. He is the "ishta devata" of the people of Odisha and the messenger of Odia culture. He is above all hatred and opposition. He is an integrated symbol of friendship and harmony of all religions. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient.

To seek his blessings, devotees from all corners of the world rush to Shreekshestra Puri. The calmness, happiness, and a sense of fulfilment that the devotee experiences after darshan of the Lord is beyond description.

The name Jagannath is very popular with the people of Odisha. As soon as this name is remembered, meditated upon and uttered, the mind is greatly transformed and the heart is thrilled. The devotees crave for a darshan, a chance to set their eyes on their favourite deity to be free from all sorrows, sins, dangers and fears. Unity in diversity is the hallmark of his eternal rhythm. His daily rituals reflect a human life. The yearly visit to the Gundichaa temple having home-made cakes (Poda Pithaa) from Mausī Maa on the way reflects the social values of Odia life. The common man finds it so easy to relate. He reigns on their hearts.

From birth to death, from childbirth to the battlefield, He is always in the minds of people like the head of the family. Fondly called by so many names, Jagannath, Jaga, Jagabandhu, Kalia Saant, Daru Brahma, Chaka Nayan, Chaka Dola, Neela Shaila, He is the soul of Odia race, founder, mover, inspirer, strong leader. That is why Utkalamani Pandit Gopabandhu Das named Shree Jagannath as the true leader of Odisha and wrote: Odisha does not need any other leader as Lord Jagannath is our leader.

Change is the only constant (the truth) in this world. In that change, Odisha's revered idol Jagannath is the only constant. Those who held and hold the political fortunes must have related to the consciousness of Sri Jagannath in heart and at work.

I wish by the blessings of Lord Jagannath, the new government will be able to take Odisha forward on the path of progress, happiness and prosperity in the spirit of "Sarba Dharma Samanwaya".

It is time for all of us to imbibe ourselves with the message of love, truth, tolerance and universal brotherhood transmitted through Jagannath Cult which is based upon peak ideals of democracy, humanitarian principle of equality, justice, honesty and integrity.

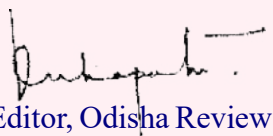
Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to those whose writings have enriched the current publication.

The cooperation of the Principal Secretary, I & PR Department, the unwavering support and encouragement of the Director, the tireless efforts of my colleagues, Odisha Review team and the help from various angles are gratefully acknowledged for the preparation of this volume. I would like to thank the Director, Deputy Director and other officers of the Odisha Government Press for their timely support in bringing out this publication.

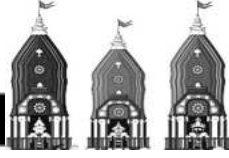
During my short span of tenure, I with the team have tried our best to reach out to a wider number of contributors. There is always so much one can do. Always there is so much more to be done. The objective is to seek betterment if not excellence.

I wish all success to the new editor of Odisha Review in this endeavour.

Jay Jagannath.



Editor, Odisha Review



Lord Jagannath: A Mystery

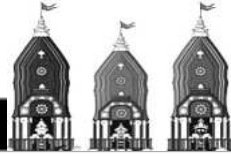
Prof. (Dr.) Sarbeswar Kar

Many facts, stories, traditions and hearsays exist concentrating on Jagannath, His origin and the Jagannath cult. Researchers are still now carrying on extensive research to penetrate the astounding mysteries associated with Lord Jagannath. Many schools of thoughts have also appeared with regard to the origin and growth of Jagannath cult. The scholars have also held different notions on the development of Jagannath cult.

The origin and antiquity of Lord Jagannath worship at Puri is still shrouded in mystery. Many scholars and historians have also tried to trace the origin and antiquity of Lord Jagannath, but no positive and commonly acceptable evidence have come to light so far to unveil as to how and when this concept has come into existence in Puri and also became one of the prominent deities of Hindu Pantheon. It is also not clear whether Lord Jagannath originally is a Hindu Aryan deity or tribal deity.

The concept of Jagannath is not only confined to Hinduism but also extends to both Jainism and Buddhism. Pandit Nilakantha Das has suggested that Jagannath cult is primarily a Jaina cult. He has opined that the three images of Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath collectively stand for the Jaina-Trinity (Tri-Ratna). There are other scholars who suggest that Jagannath is of Vedic origin. The Rig Veda and Atharva Veda have few references about the divine “Daru”, which has been identified in course of time with Jagannath. But these references are not sufficient enough to prove Jagannath as a Vedic deity.

In the different traditions that have evolved about the deity, the name of Indradyumna is common. Indradyumna was a king of Avanti in the Satya Yuga. Odishan literature particularly, Sisukrishna Das’s “Deulatola” accepted him as a great votary of Lord Vishnu. He sent Vidyapati, the brother of his family priest to Odradesa to locate the exact place where Lord Nilamadhava (Vishnu) was worshipped



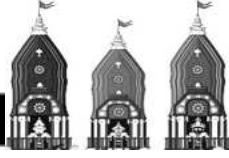
secretly. Coming to Odradesa Vidyapati took shelter in a Sabara village very near to the “Blue Mountain” (Nilasaila). Vidyapati made friendship with the family of the Sabara chief Visvvasu concealing his identity and motive of coming to that place. He married his daughter Lalita and with her help Vidyapati was able to see Lord Nilamadhava. On seeing the image of Nilamadhava his eyes glittered. After tracing the route to the shrine he returned to Avanti and informed Indradyumna the whereabouts of Lord Nilamadhava. King Indradyumna with his forces, accompanied by Narad, set out in his journey to Odradesa. No sooner the king reached the boundary of Odradesa, then he came to know about the miraculous disappearance of the shrine. Narada, however, assured that the Lord would appear in the form of “Daru” (sacred wood). After a few days, Lord Nilamadhava made his appearance in a dream to the king Indradyumna.

As directed by Nilamadhava in the dream, Indradyumna brought the ‘Daru’ from the sea-shore and ordered for fashioning beautiful images out of the sacred ‘Daru’. Accordingly, Indradyumna got the images Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra and Chakra Sudarshan made out of the sacred ‘Daru’. The story was very interesting that Indradyumna was also advised by Narada to invite Brahma to construct a temple as a sign of dignity. There was some delay in Brahma’s coming and meanwhile ages had passed and Galamadhava became the king of Odisha and claimed the temple as his own. Legendary account further continues

that the dispute between Indradyumna and Galamadhava was amicably settled and full credit of building the temple was given to Indradyumna. Very interestingly, this Indradyumna legend associating the Sabaras with the Lord Nilamadhava (Jagannath) is also supported by epigraphic and historical evidences. The Sabaras, who belonged to the proto-Austroloid tribe were the worshippers of tree in the Mahendragiri from the ancient times which was replaced by the “Sthanumurti” worship in course of time. Later on, this “Sthanumurti” worship seems to have mingled with the worship of the God Purusottama-Vishnu.

An analysis of the history of Jagannath indicates that Saivism had rendered remarkable contribution to the evolution of Jagannath cult. In the early medieval period, during the rule of the Bhaumakaras, Odisha was a great centre of tantric Saivism. In several tantric works of the medieval period, Jagannath is described as the tantric god of Odradesa. Tantrayamala describes the wooden image of Jagannath as the presiding deity of Sriksheetra in Utkal. In various other tantric texts, Vimala, the Pitheswari of Puri is described as Bhairavi and Jagannath as Bhairava. Rice offering in the temple is first given to Vimala and then only it becomes Mahaprasad. Jagannath is also worshipped in the Bhairava Mantra.

During the Ganga period Vaishnavite tradition developed round the cult of Jagannath. Ramanuja emphasized Lord Krishna’s relation with his sister Ekanamsa and brother Balarama- Samkarshana.



Ekanamsa was interpreted as a form of Durga and Balarama as a form of Siva. In Ramanuja's Pancharatra rites, Siva came to be known as Balabhadra. So, the Jagannath cult brought the synthesis of three main cults of Hinduism, Vaishnavism, Saivism and Saktism in its final phase. Anangabhimha Deva III (1225 AD) mentions in his Puri inscription about Halin, Chakrin and Subhadra, who are no other than Balabhadra, Jagannath and Subhadra. Another strong evidence of this synthesis is seen in one of the sculptures of the Konark temple in which it is seen that Narasimha Dev-I is worshipping a Linga (Siva), Purusottama (Vishnu) and Durga trinity. Thus, according to some scholars Jagannath Nilamadhava was primarily a Siva Linga. In this connection the Purusottama Mahatmya also gives great importance to Siva worship. Originally, the so-called "Blue-Mountain" (Nilasaila) was nothing more than a Sivalinga, the symbol of creativity.

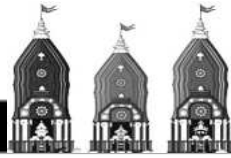
In the ancient period the Savaras of Odisha were worshipping a Lingam at Mahendragiri region, which was most probably an imaginary replica of the famous Sivalingam at Sri Sailam in Andhra Pradesh. The Savaras of Odisha were very much influenced by the Deity and began worshipping as Nilamadhava. Later on, the Matharas took possession of the Deity. Then the early Gangas worshipped the deity as Gokarneswar. In a complex and mysterious manner, in due course this process was transferred to Puri. This deity was no other than Nilamadhava or Srikrishna, initially identified as a Siva linga. Thus, through a

slow and gradual process the present Jagannath has emerged from the concept of Siva.

In this connection, archaeological evidences reveal that Puri was a Saiva Kshetra on the basis of the prevalence of the Pancha Mahadevas, i.e, Markandeya, Yameswar, Kapalamochana, Lokanatha and Nilakantheswar in Puri town and the Isaneswar, Pataleswar, Kshetrapala Siva temples etc. inside the Jagannath temple campus. These observations lead us to conclude that the basic lay out of the Puri town consists of one temple on a hill near the seashore, with the Siva temples built on the foot of the hill and these Siva temples are of considerable antiquity. In fact, Saivism was the dominant Hindu religion of Odisha throughout the period, during which the Hinduisation of the wooden God must have taken place.

The mystery hovering around the Lord Jagannath is difficult to be uncovered. Down the ages many scholars have tried their best to know about such mystery, they have hardly achieved any success. The mysterious deities worshipped in Puri temple is now being worshipped not only in India but also all over the world. This is the greatness of Jagannath cult.

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Mysore, Karnataka



The Jagannatha Cult

Er.(Dr) Sunil Kumar Pattanayak

Odisha is known for its vibrant Jagannatha culture, which has made rapid strides all over world. The vastness of this cult is felt everywhere not only in India but also abroad. The Jagannatha cult is a unique example of regional culture that emerged in the eastern Indian state of Odisha. It centers around the worship of Lord Jagannatha, a Hindu deity believed to be a manifestation of Lord Vishnu.

The Jagannatha cult is characterized by elaborate rituals and festivals unique to the region. The most notable of these is the Rath Yatra or Chariot Festival, during which images of Lord Jagannatha, his brother Lord Balabhadra, and his sister Devi Subhadra are paraded through the streets of Puri.

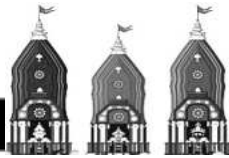
The Jagannatha Temple in Puri is one of India's most prominent Hindu pilgrimage sites and is intimately tied to the worship of Lord Jagannatha. The temple complex houses the distinctive

image of Lord Jagannatha, which is believed to have been carved from wood by a divine craftsman.

The Jagannatha cult is a religious and cultural phenomenon in Odisha, India, centered around the worship of Lord Jagannatha, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Its unique traditions include the Rath Yatra, a grand procession of the idols of Lord Jagannatha, Balabhadra, and Subhadra attracting millions of devotees worldwide.

The Jagannatha cult is a deeply spiritual and vibrant religious tradition that originated in Odisha, India. According to legend, King Indradyumna dreamt of Lord Jagannath, who instructed him to build a temple in his honor. Thus, the iconic Jagannatha temple was built in Puri, which is now a revered pilgrimage site in India.

Over the centuries, the Jagannatha cult has evolved and grown, incorporating



ancient tribal and folk traditions of Odisha into the broader Hindu religious tradition. The cult has also been adopted by different communities and sects, each adding its unique beliefs and practices to the worship of Lord Jagannatha.

Today, the Jagannatha cult has gained global recognition, with followers and devotees in various parts of the world, including the United States and Southeast Asia. The cult is famous for its elaborate rituals and festivals, with the Rath Yatra or chariot festival being the most prominent. Millions of devotees from around the world gather to witness the grand procession of Lord Jagannatha's chariot during the festival.

The Jagannatha cult is distinguished by intricate rituals and festivals unique to the region, as well as a rich history and mythology that has evolved over time. According to history, indigenous tribes in the area worshipped Lord Jagannatha at first, but his popularity expanded due to the impact of Vaishnavism, a form of Hinduism that emphasizes devotion to Lord Vishnu.

The worship is intimately tied with the Jagannatha Temple in Puri, which is one of India's most prominent Hindu pilgrimage sites. The temple complex houses Lord Jagannatha's distinctive picture, which is said to have been sculpted from wood by a heavenly craftsman.

The Jagannatha worship is also noted for its peculiar festivities, most

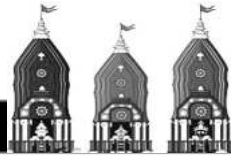
notably the Rath Yatra or Chariot Festival. Finally, the Jagannatha cult exemplifies how regional culture can create distinctive customs and practices that reflect the history, beliefs, and social dynamics of a specific geographic area.

The Ganga Dynasty ruled over regions of present-day Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh from the 4th to the 11th century CE, and is well-known for its patronage of art, literature, and religion, particularly the Shaivism sect of Hinduism.

Despite their primary association with Shaivism, the Ganga rulers significantly impacted the development of the Jagannatha cult, a Vaishnavite tradition that originated in Odisha. They generously donated to the Jagannatha temple in Puri, one of the most significant pilgrimage sites for Jagannatha devotees, and constructed numerous temples dedicated to Lord Jagannatha in their own territories.

Moreover, the Ganga Dynasty's contributions to the Jagannatha cult also include the establishment of a unique style of temple architecture that blended elements of Shaivite and Vaishnavite styles. Additionally, they facilitated the standardization of the Odia language for religious texts and literature, making it more accessible to the masses.

The Jagannatha Temple is a significant religious, architectural, and historical monument in India. Its



construction dates back to the 12th century, and it boasts a unique blend of Kalinga and Dravidian styles of architecture, making it a remarkable example of Indian temple architecture. Apart from its architectural splendor, the temple is also renowned for its annual Rath Yatra or Chariot Festival.

The Jagannatha Temple is more than just a place of worship; it is a symbol of unity and inclusivity. Regardless of caste or religion, the temple welcomes all visitors. Moreover, the blessed food or Prasad offered to the deity is distributed to all devotees, regardless of their social status. Despite facing various challenges such as structural damage due to natural disasters and restrictions on entry for non-Hindus in recent years, the Jagannatha Temple remains a symbol of resilience, faith, and cultural identity for the people of Odisha and India.

The cult of Jagannath represents the best example of regional cultures growing in regional kingdoms. Jagannatha which literally means the *Lord of the World* is a name for Vishnu, found in Puri, Odisha. Even to date, the local tribes continue the traditions by making the wooden image of the deity, which shows that the deity was initially a local god which was later identified with Vishnu.

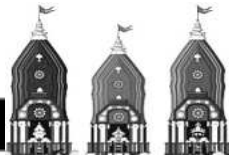
In fact, it is also believed when **Pandavas** were starting their journey to Yamlok, Sapt Rishis asked them to go to 'Char Dham' and Jagannath Puri was one of them.

The Jagannath cult symbolizes universal brotherhood by amalgamating tribal religious practices along with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, and as per some religious and social analysts, the temple's main deities, Jagannath, his elder brother Balabhadra, and younger sister Subhadra, are represented in black, white, and yellow. They depict the three major races of humanity. This is one of four pilgrimage sites or char dham in India.

The cult of Jagannath is considered to be a gift to humanity to fulfil its desire of spiritual peace, social harmony and universal divinity. One can find this cult has revived the religious traditions, where rigidity embedded the religion in ancient India. Each group and community was given the freedom to develop their religious faith with no rigidity or intolerance of any kind.

The devotees worshipped their deity in Puri on the Blue Hill, hence, Puri is referred to as Nilachal. Later, this tribal deity came to be identified with Lord Jagannath. It has been pointed out by scholars that Lord Jagannath has a pre-Aryan, tribal appearance.

Jagannath cult exercises deep influence over the socio-religious-political life of Odisha. During the Ganga and Surya rules, Jagannath, so to say, became the State deity. Jagannath cult is an amalgam of diverse religious cults like tribal religion, Brahmanical religion, Buddhism, Saivism, Shaktism, Tantricism and Vaishnavism. Puri has been visited from ancient times by founders of different religious cults, who left their legacy through the monasteries. It



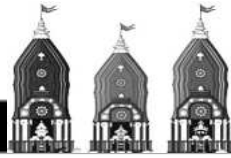
has become one of the four important places of pilgrimage for the devout Hindus not only of Odisha but also of all parts of India. Largest crowds of devotees are to be noticed in Puri at the time of the car festival of Lord Jagannath. It is the belief of Hindus that on seeing Lord Jagannath, the manifestation of supreme being, in his chariot, one never falls into the mire of the cycle of rebirth.

The religious tradition of a region gives rise to a distinct regional culture. For example, the cult of Lord Jagannath at Puri in Odisha, around whom the religious life of Odisha has evolved. Legendary sources suggest that Jagannath was originally a local

god who was later considered to be a form of Vishnu. The temple for Lord Jagannath at Puri was built in the 12th century by Anantavarman, the King of the Ganga dynasty. King Anangabhima III dedicated his empire to Lord Jagannath and identified himself as the deputy of the Lord. Gradually, the temple became an important centre of pilgrimage. It has become one of the four important places of pilgrimage for the devout Hindus of all parts of India.

**Chairman
Suddhananda Group of Institutions.**





Lord Jagannath in India and Abroad

Prof.(Dr.) Kamal Jeet Singh

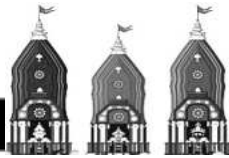
Puri, the abode of Lord Jagannath, is famous for Hindu pilgrims. Not only Hindus but also people of different faiths visit Puri every year for its wholesome climatic conditions and religious importance. People from different parts of the world congregate at Puri in large bulk on many festive occasions and witness the holy rituals of the Puri Trinity. Puri is one of the four Dharmas (most religious sacred places) of India considering religious importance of Hindu religion and belief.

The Jagannath consciousness is not confined to only Odisha and India. It has recently spread to many parts of the world where the temples of Lord Jagannath have been built and deities installed. In those temples holy rituals are also being performed. Lord Jagannath appears to be a cosmopolitan deity as people of different hues and creeds like to pay visit to Puri to have a glimpse of its presiding deity Lord Jagannath. Rath Yatra (car festival as designated by the Britishers) is the famous ritualistic ceremony of Lord Jagannath,

which is celebrated in a grand scale in Puri. This sacred festival is also celebrated simultaneously at different places all over the world, where Jagannath temples are found. Thus the Jagannath cult has crossed the national boundaries and reached international arena. Day by day this holy cult is being propagated far and wide which speaks of the importance and accessibility of Lord Jagannath.

The Jagannath Temple at Puri has a history as rich and fascinating as the deity it is dedicated to. According to Hindu mythology, Lord Jagannath is believed to be an incarnation of Lord Krishna, and the temple is regarded as one of the Char Dham (four divine abodes) pilgrimage sites for Hindus. The temple's origins date back to ancient times, and there are several legends surrounding its creation.

One of the most popular legends attributes the temple's establishment to King Indradyumna, a pious and devout ruler. He dreamt of Lord Jagannath and, guided by



divine inspiration, he embarked on a quest to find the deity's image and construct a grand temple for its worship. It is believed that Lord Vishnu, in the guise of an artist, helped King Indradyumna in carving the deities' wooden idols. The temple construction commenced under the king's supervision.

An intriguing aspect of the Jagannath Temple's history is the ritualistic process of creating the deities' idols. The idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra are made from a sacred type of wood called "Daru Brahma." The temple priests identify these specific trees by certain divine marks, and the idols are carved from the logs. This holy tree is known as Neem (*Azardicta Indica*), which is copiously found in India. This tree is known for its bitter taste which protects the wooden images of the Puri Trinity from insects and pests.

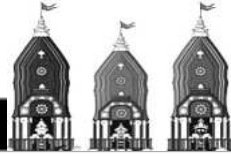
The most remarkable aspect of this process is that the idols must be carved from a single log, and a new set of idols is carved only when the old ones have decayed. This event, known as "Nabakalebara," is a grand spectacle and occurs once every 12 to 19 years.

The Jagannath Temple stands as an architectural marvel that reflects the Kalinga style of architecture prevalent in Odisha. The main temple complex is enclosed by high walls and consists of several significant structures such as Singhadwara (Lion Gate): The main entrance to the temple, Singhadwara, is an awe-inspiring gateway

guarded by colossal stone lions. It is through this gate that devotees and visitors enter the temple complex. Mukhashala (Main Hall): The main hall of the temple is known as the Mukhashala, and it is where the idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra are kept. The hall features intricate stone carvings, and it is where devotees come to offer their prayers and seek darshan (a glimpse of the deities). The temple of Lord Jagannath was built during 13th century AD and is known as 'white pagoda'.

Lord Jagannath and His Siblings-The primary deity of the Jagannath Temple is Lord Jagannath, a form of Lord Krishna. Alongside Lord Jagannath, the temple also houses idols of Lord Balabhadra (Balarama) and Devi Subhadra. These three deities are worshipped together, and they represent the divine sibling bond. The annual Rath Yatra (Chariot Festival) is one of the most significant religious events associated with the temple. During this grand festival, the deities are taken out of the temple in massive chariots and paraded through the streets of Puri. This event draws millions of devotees and tourists, making it one of the largest religious gatherings in the world. During this festival the Grand Road of Puri is marked by a sea of humanity drawn from different parts of the world.

The name "Jagannath" is often translated as "Lord of the Universe." Lord Jagannath is revered for his all-encompassing love and mercy, which is said to extend to all beings, irrespective of their social status or background. The temple



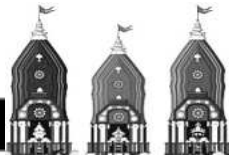
serves as a symbol of unity, bringing together people from diverse backgrounds in the spirit of devotion.

The unique feature of the deities' appearance is the absence of traditional facial features. The faces of Lord Jagannath and his siblings are round, with large eyes, and they are adorned with conical-shaped crowns. This unique representation of the divine is deeply rooted in spiritual and philosophical symbolism, representing the formless and universal nature of divinity. The large eyes of Lord Jagannath are a symbol of His omniscience and omnipresence for devotees all over the world. According to many ancient texts, scriptures and beliefs, the eyes are considered the windows to the soul and Lord Jagannath's big eyes are a symbol of His divine vision and wisdom.

Lord Jagannath is another name for Lord Krishna. They are both identical. In order to express his transcendental feelings or Mahabhava, Krishna assumed the form of Lord Jagannath. Krishna is hence same as Lord Jagannath. To most Vaishnava Hindus, particularly the Krishnaites, Jagannath is an abstract representation of Krishna, sometimes as the Avatar of Vishnu. Lord Jagannath is considered an Avatar (Incarnation) of Lord Vishnu. In fact, He has the attributes of all the Avatars of Lord Vishnu. Lord Jagannath is worshipped in different forms on different occasions. For example, He is frequently identified with Lord Shri Krishna. Lord Krishna is also called Lord Jagannath. They both are non-

different. When Krishna developed Mahabhava i.e transcendental emotions, He took the form of Lord Jagannath. So Krishna and Lord Jagannath are same.

Now Jagannath is worshipped in many ISKCON temples around the world as Lord Krishna. He is the most merciful and charming who excuses his devotees' offenses and attracts them further along the path of devotional service. Jagannath means "Lord of universe". Many Vedic scriptures mention that Jagannath is Krishna. Baladev is his brother and Subhadra is his sister. Although Krishna is absolute and transcendental to material nature, to accept the loving service of his devotees, He appears before us as the deity in the temple, in the form of stone, metal, wood or paint. Jagannath is a wooden form of Krishna. People may wonder how he can be Krishna. Scriptures tell us that Jagannatha is Krishna. However, the international society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON); known colloquially as the Hare Krishna movement, has been spreading the philosophy of Lord Krishna, Who is also Lord Jagannath. The ISKCON is a Gaudiya Vaishnava Hindu religious organisation. It was founded on 13 July 1966 in New York city by A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Its main headquarters is located in Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The ISKCON has more than 800 temples and centres all over the world. On the day of Rath Yatra the ISKCON devotees celebrate it. They have also popularised Rath Yatra in the world.



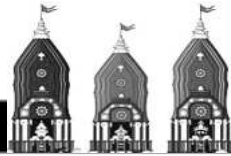
POPULAR SRI JAGANNATH TEMPLES IN INDIA AND WORLD:

Besides Puri, Odisha, there are several Jagannath temples in India. Popular such temples exist in New Delhi, Vishakhapatnam, Hyderabad, Chhatisgarh, Ahmedabad and many other places. In those places Rath Yatra is also being held in a massive scale.

There are more than 15 Jagannath temples in United States of America. They are at Huntcvila, America, Alabama, Nashville, (TN), Cleveland (OH), Detroit (Michigan, MI-USA), Freemont (California), Dallas (TX), Austin (TX), Illinois (Chicago), New York, Washington (DC), Minnesota, Arizona (Scottsdale AZ), Tampa (Florida), Washington and other places.

There are three Jagannath temples in Australia. They are at Byron Bay, Gold Coast and Madrid. Similarly two temples exist in Argentina. One is at Buenos Aires and another at Colombia. One temple each at Bangladesh and Germany. Other popular Jagannath temples exist in Toronto, Canada, Thailand, Mexico, London, Los Angeles, Italy, Hong Kong, San Fransisco, Chikago, Sao Pulo (Brazil), Paris, Taiwan, Sydney, Montreal, Venice Beach, Vancouver, Ottawa, Rio de Janeiro, Sibal (Mauritius), Soho Street (near Oxford Street, London) and Ranesa (South Africa)

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Unwritten Law of Mediation During Mahabharat

D.P. Choudhury

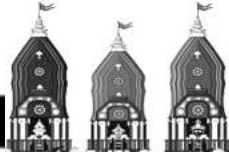
Mediation is the process of settlement of dispute in a non-adversary manner. It is one of the conciliatory method to dilute the lis. Mediation is persuaded by Mediator. Both parties place their respective cases, then Mediator open up different avenues of settlement of dispute. If parties do not agree to any way of settlement, then the Mediator usually records the same and resultantly, the record is resubmitted to the Court, who used to record the plea of parties and also proceed further with adjudicatory method, i.e., the adversary way. But when on persuasion by Mediator, parties arrived at any settlement in the process of Mediation, the Mediator used to record the settlement and transmit the same to the Court, who after ascertaining the facts, go with the settlement. The Court used to dispose of the dispute in accordance with the settlement arrived between the parties before the Mediator and pass order directing to make settlement agreement executed by the parties as part and parcel of the final order. This process of Mediation is recognized well in the present era.

Mediation is not only of today but also it is an age old practice. The following episode will show the unwritten mediation during Mahabharat era.

During Mahabharat, the real hero was none other than Lord Krishna. He is everywhere and in every being. His Maya was unknown to anybody except Himself. He is undivided, unparallel, unbound and universal. Without His existence, a little leaf does not come out. For that it is said in Odia that:-

“Kari Karau Thae Muhin, Mo Binu Anya Gati Nahin”

It speaks that every act of play is performed by Him. He is none other than Himself. All we know that there were two groups of family during the era of Mahabharat; one is Pandavas and another is Kauravas. It reveals from epics and Gita (A religious scripture) that King Dhritrashtra was very kin to see that his son should receive lion share in the property of Hastinapur Kingdom. His unblemished love



for his sons has become a weapon of offence to diminish his line of succession. But, his son Duryadhan was more anxious to enjoy the whole property without sharing the same to Pandavas, who are his cousins. The dispute broke out with regard to the property.

The Time came when Judhistira, who is epitome of Dharma did not want war but his desire was to have actual share so that he and his other brother of Pandav dynasty would live peacefully.

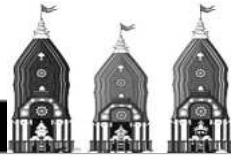
Meeting was convened by the Pandavas. Lord Krishna, being the Sutradhar, kept his gracious presence in the meeting. His presence anywhere is auspicious one. Nobody can predict his presence but He is omnipresent. Lord Krishna always lives in the soul of pious and religious person. Religion does not mean, a person must feel nostalgic for Hindu or any religion. But, He should show the utmost care for humanity. Lord Krishna nowhere in Gita has said about any religion but only vouched about truth to prevail and Dharma to be sacrosanct. Dharma does not mean religion but honest faith to duty to worship.

Judhistir always, being in favour of dharma, asked Lord Krishna as to ways and means of their livelihood as no part of estate was available to them. During course of meeting, Judhistir suggested Lord Krishna to give his view if they would propose their share before King Dhritarashtra, who is their elder father. Lord Krishna replied that a proposal should be mooted from the side of Pandavas to Karuravas. Judhistir

suggested to Lord Krishna that he is independent and respectable to both parties, should be emissary on behalf of Pandavas. Also he suggested to mediate the issue between the Pandavas in one hand and the Kauravas on the other. Lord Krishna, being the almighty and great future teller, could sense the consequences. He gladly accepted the proposal of Judhistir to whom Lord Krishna used to address as elder brother. He is related to everybody, be it living being or non-living being but not related to any emotion or material object. He is invisible but visible to good path oriented people.

However, Lord Krishna, as per the request of Judhistir, proceeded to Hastinapur, where he was welcomed by Dhritarashtra, Bhishma-the great grandfather and other warriors, but Duryodhan remained indifferent and disrespectful to Lord Krishna. After seeing Him, the turbulence was felt in the Darbar Hall. All present there could guess that some great thing is going to happen. But, He was not surprised to them as he is related to Kauravas also. Lord Krishna wished everybody with His usual smiling face because none in the World is inimical to Him. He never shows any frowning face. He has charming eyes, lovable lips, simply teeth and adorned with ornaments. He was attired with yellow colour cloth (Pita Bastra).

Lord Krishna took his seat in the Darbar of Dhritarashtra as per the request of latter. He is trikaldarshi, He knows what would happen on the very next moment. On being requested by Dhritarashtra, Lord Krishna explained the purpose of His visit.



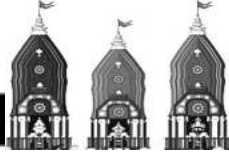
Everybody in the Hall was eager to know the desire of Lord Krishna. He proposed to Dhritarashtra to explain his view qua to the maintenance of Pandavas as they have no place to stay. Dhritarashtra, being apologetic, but with cunning mind due to lots of love and affection for Duryodhan and also at the imminent fear of him, asked the Minister (Bidur) to take the view of Duryodhan. The Minister was astonished and prayed to King to do justice by awarding part of kingdom to Pandavas instead of asking Duryodhan. King Dhritarashtra, being in immense attachment with Duryodhan, forgot the duty as elder father.

The attraction between the son and father should be regarded as descent and pure. The father is required to be guide, friend, philosopher of son, but father should not leave every decision to son during his lifetime. A father should be humble to son for showering blessings but son equally should be respectable and humble to father. A son has got duty to parents to take their care but not to grab their vested right. A son should be careful to the wants of parents and always be remorseful to the pains of parents. When father has got future uncertainty, the son should stand by his side to extend courage and hope for tomorrow.

But alas, Duryodhan, being ungrateful to Dhritarashtra, snatched away the decision making process from his father and started to convey his decision to Lord Krishna. Only Lord Krishna, being great Mediator and merciful, advised to share five provinces, but Duryodhan, in strong and protesting voice, denounced the proposal of

Lord Krishna. Bhishma, Dhritarashtra and other tried to convince Duryodhan, a disgruntled son not only denied to receive their advice but also challenged Lord Krishna in humiliating voice. Lord Krishna knew that if anything goes beyond the border of talk, the heaven would fall from sky to sea causing death of innumerable people including Duryodhan. So, Lord Krishna used to allow human being to cross the Laxman Rekha because human being has limitless wants and does every effort to enjoy the uncertainty.

Lord Krishna, being great Mediator, always used to side Judhistir Dharma and every of his decision is for the welfare of human society and justice. His blessing is always prayed for and we are eager to meditate Him for the prosperity and happiness of human being. Whenever man proposes, God disposes, but, everybody is allowed to gain happiness if his deeds are well within boundary. Lord Krishna even proposed to share five villages for five Pandavas, but Duryodhan, overriding his father Dhritarashtra, strongly contended in frowning voice that **he would not spare a single inch of land to Pandavas without any war.** This decision brings melancholy to the members of Darbar of Dhritarashtra. Bhishma, the great grandfather expressed displeasure with Duryodhan, who thwarted Bhishma with dire consequence. Dhritarashtra, being the silent spectator remained subdued and has no guts to protest Duryodhan. Lord Krishna tried to convince Duryodhan and has discharged duty what is best for both parties. It is always said that



the deeds are always the best evidence of articulating one's fate/destiny.

A strange scene occurred in the Darbar hall. Duryodhan not only declined to spare an inch of land but also insulted Lord Krishna, who had come as Ambassador and Mediator. Lord Krishna requested Duryodhan to reconsider his request, but Duryodhan misbehaved Lord Krishna and ordered to arrest him, who without fear showed his original feature, i.e., Viswarup Darshan. Lord Krishna became **Chaturddha Murtti** and showed His four hands along with smiling face, being adorned with Pitambari and having Conch, Chakra, Gada and Lotus in his forehands. All are symbols of peace, prosperity, blessing and the wealth. He always tries to caution the people to lead in the path of justice and truth. He never spares any person, who runs in the bad path. When Duryodhan insulted Lord Krishna, He came back and informed Yudhistir about the events occurred in Darbar Hall and conveyed the decision of Duryodhan. Again Lord Krishna was asked by Pandavas as to what would be His decision, Lord Krishna replied that justice and truth must prevail. There is no alternative to war to justify that Pandavas are entitled to their legitimate share.

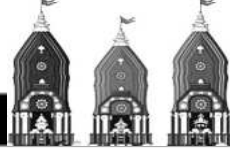
According to Lord Krishna, one has to be ready to suffer the consequence if his percentage of injustice goes beyond sky.

As such, the Mediator used to pacify the discontentment between the parties but when the parties do not agree to peaceful

decision, it goes to the Court for contest and winners get the justice. Thus, at the time of Mahabharat, when the proposal of Lord Krishna as Mediator was not accepted by Duryodhan with the proper perspective, the Mediation failed and it led to war like the parties are sent to Court of justice to contest. So, the war is equivalent to the battlefield of the Court of justice where one party wins and another party loses. Similarly, during Mahabharat war, both the parties fought with each other in a very genocide manner. It was eighteen days war. During Mahabharat, the injustice (Adharma) was removed from the world and finally the disgruntle Duryodhan has to lose all his brothers and all other great warriors like Drona etc. It was a bloodshed war. When anger, greediness and desires are excessive, the same is burnt always in war like situation. Many lives are sacrificed. Lord Krishna was present in the war but has never touched any weapon of offence and he, being omnipresent, has seen the justice and truth to prevail, which is also essence of Gita. Lord Krishna has come to the earth to bless the justice and to wipe out injustice. Therefore, in Gita, Lord Krishna has said in the following manner:-

**“Yada Yada Hi Dharmasya, Glanir Bhabati Bharatah
Abhiyuthanam Adharmasya Tadatmanam
Srijamyahyam
Paritranaya Sadhunam Binasayacha Duskrita
Dharmasansthapanathayat Sambhabami Yuge Yuge”**

The author, therefore, hereby prayed Lord Krishna to always shower His blessings and happiness to mankind.



Shree Mahaprasada and Universal Brotherhood

Prof. Soumendra Mudali

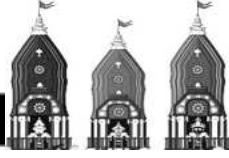
The Temple of Lord Jagannath is known as Shankha Kshetra or Purusottam Kshetra, most popular is Shree Jagannath Dham. It is located at the Eastern India on Bay of Bangal in the District of Puri of Odisha State. World Tourism map has an important place for the shrine of Lord Jagannath, the Supreme Deity of Lordship, which attracts millions of people from all around the globe, specially during the world Car Festival to have the darshan of Gods, Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra. The famous Car Festival falls sometime between June-July every year.

From time immemorial the continuing process of religious practices & principles have made it live, pious and humanistic with Lord Jagannath. For the eternity of human history the Gate of Lord Jagannath is open to all religious sects to which the devotees of Sri Ram, Krishna, Hanuman, Buddha, Jain, Shaiba and Shakta or Baisnavites etc. have no conflict among them in believing Lord Jagannath. He is the flexion

of one unexplained emotion or devotion to all. His existence is famous everywhere, like in ocean, land, mountain, forest, sky and fire. Rig Veda says “Tad Ekam” means you are one in everything.

Lord Jagannath is a living God, who lives and moves with us too dear for our evdearment, too living for our love’s play, too intimate for many of our living moments of intimacies. He is so much human, so much divine and so much ever more about to be that. He baffles all our understandings, surpasses all our logic and language.

If we open the pages of history, we find Bhoi Dynasty king Ramachandra Dev (1568-1600 A D) who was popularly known as 2nd Indradyumna, installed the Deities on the jewelled platform (or Ratna Singhasan). Subsequently in consultation with learned priests started offering cooked food (Sankhudi Bhog) for the Lords. With a resounding sound of Hari Naam, he started distributing this popularly known as Sankhudi Bhog (cooked food) to all saints and devotees



present before Lord Jagannath. According to Madala Panji, a daily diary record of Sri Jagannath Temple rituals Mahaprasad was prevalent since the then king Ramachandra Dev. But, if we study and analyse different Sanskrit ancient epics, we find vivid description of the importance of Mahaprasad. There is no caste bar or social disparity in taking Mahaprasad together.

In course of time varieties of food items offered to Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra installed on the jewelled platform can be classified under three types, such as Satwik or conducive to goodness, Rajasika conducive to passion and Tamasika conducive to darkness and sloth. Rice, Dal, Milk or milk products & fruits come under conducive to goodness or Satwika. In taking these types of food creates a mental state like, pity, peace & religious belief. Under Rajasika or conducive to passion foods are meat, egg, buffalo milk, onion, garlic, and are forbidden, because these types of food create aggressive behaviour in the individual. Tamasika or conducive to darkness types of food are Alcoholic drinks, beef, pig and rotten meat etc. Intake of these types of food, creates a sense of cruelty, lack of foresight. Since Lord Jagannath is the Supreme God, only Satwika or conducive to goodness types of foods are offered before Lord Jagannath.

Why Mahaprasad:

Two major attractions drag devotees to Puri, the golden Sea Beach and Supreme God Lord Jagannath and His palatable Mahaprasad. Mahaprasad is Nectar, it is

sacred, its intake creates and eternal contentment to the soul, a feeling of bliss, its intake drives away all pathos of life. Mahaprasad represents fraternity, sacredness, it is healthy and hygienic. The kitchen fire is Baishnabagni, cooked by Goddess Mahalaxmi. It's spiritual impact is liberation of the soul. It is prepared with deep devotion.

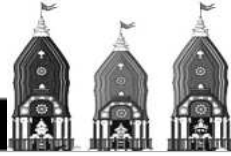
The process of offering is made through Sadanga Sanskar as per the incantation given below:

॥ ଯଜ୍ଞାଗ୍ନୌ ପାଚିତଞ୍ଜୈବ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରରାଜେନ ନ୍ୟାସିତଂ
ଦୁର୍ଗିତଂ ମନ୍ତ୍ରରାଜେନ ଗୋବିନ୍ଦେନ ନିବେଦନମ୍ ॥

It implies that the cooking is prepared by Goddess Laxmi in Baishnabagni. As per Bamadev Samhita first the worshipping priest, Acharya welcomes Shree Ganesh, who is supposed to be the God of destroyer of all evils, thereafter, shall pray Mother Goddess Mahalaxmi for cooking the palatable dishes for the Lord. Thus, faults fade away alter the coking made by Baishnabagni.

As per Brahma Purana, an ancient epic Lord Vishnu told to Lord Brahma, 'those oblations which are offered before me that I accept through my unblinking eyes, but taste it through the tongue of my devotees, who take its grace.'

On the auspicious propitious like marriage, sacred thread, first Birthday of the child, even the funeral feasts varieties of palatable Mahaprasad items are served to guest's content. To keep the home surrounding safe from any incoming danger dry Mahaprasad is kept preserved at the worshipping chamber or surroundings of a happy home. In any social groups oath is taken



with prime importance to Mahaprasad. The concept of Mahaprasad is not only confined to cooked or dry food materials only, but the varieties of decorative flowers worn by the Lords. Also come under the purview of Mahaprasad like Nakachana, Karapallav, Hruda Padak, which are used as protective symbol against any mishap, whereas cooked Mahaprasad is offered to parental ancestors on their annual death day i.e. Sradha Ceremony for their divine blessings.

Dry Kaibalya, taken early in the morning after bath, paves the way for salvation.

Most popular items served to the Lords in the daily menu comprise of fifty-six dishes known as **Chhapan Bhog**. During 1910 the items served to Lords were as many as 435 items. It can be divided as cooked food and dry food items. An enumerative list of 56 items is given below in its original terminology as used inside the temple code.

1. Atakali, 2. Amalu (Malpua) or Indian Scones, 3. Arisa (cake cooked in pure Cow ghee), 4. Enduri, 5. Kadamba, 6. Kanti, 7. Kakara, 8. Keli, 9. Kora (Sugarplum), 10. Khaira Chula, 11. Khaja (lolly toffee), 12. Khiri (Rice pudding prepared out condensed milk), 13. Khirisa, 14. Khuruma, 15. Khechedi (Hotchpotch, combination of fried rice, ginger and asafoetida), 16. Gaintha, 17. Gaja, 18. Gotali, 19. Chakata (a paste of ripe bananas mixed with cheese, milk & sugar), 20. Chakuli (Dosa), 21. Chitau, 22. Chhunchi Pitha, 23. Jagannath Ballav, 24. Jenamani, 25. Jhili, 26. Takua, 27. Dalimba, 28. Tadia (cheese cake with deep fry in ghee), 29. Tripuri, 30. Dhaula, 31. Nadi, 32. Panasua, 33. Pana (palatable sweet drink), 34. Ada Pachedi,

35. Sara Papudi (thick cream of milk), 36. Palau Khiri (one type a pudding), 37. Pakhala (water rice), 38. Suar Pitha. 39. Puri, 40. Puli, 41. Pheni, 42. Biribada, 43. Bali Baman Bhog, 44. Bhaja, 45. Manda, 46. Manohara Ladu, 47. Mahadei, 48. Mandua (prepared out of cheese atta & ghee), 49. Mohan Bhog, 50. Rasabali, 51. Ladu, 52. Radha Ballav, 53. Lahunia, 54. Laxmi Bilas, 55. Saraswatia and 56. Hansaballav. Thus Mahaprasad is Brahma of the Supreme soul as it is offered to Param Brahma Lord Jagannath.

Aforesaid 56 items offered represent the humanitarian lifestyle of Hindus. That's why Lord Jagannath is called the Human God. Nirmalya is a transformation of Mahaprasad in dried form. The flower, sandal, Tulasi which are removed from the body of Lord Jagannath turns into Nirmalya.

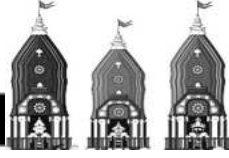
As per Sankha Purana, an ancient epic:

“ନିର୍ମାଲ୍ୟ ଗ୍ରହଣସ୍ୟାସ୍ୟ ଫଳଂ ବହୁଂ ନ ଶକ୍ନୋତି
ସାକ୍ଷାତ ବ୍ରହ୍ମ ସ୍ୱରୂପେଣ ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟେ ବପୁଷ୍ୟାହିତତ୍
ପୁଷ୍ପଚନ୍ଦନ ମାଲ୍ୟାଦି ଯଦ୍ୱଞ୍ଜିତୃପ ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟତେ
ଅପନୀତଂ ଯଥାକାଳେ ନିର୍ମାଲ୍ୟଂ ତତ୍ ପ୍ରକୀର୍ତ୍ତୟତ୍”

Lord's every used object is sacred and these are considered as Nirmalya.

Impact of Nirmalya in the life & death cycle :

- Daily routine life starts with intake of Nirmalya immediately after bath.
- As per tradition the birth giving mother becomes pious after 10th day of birthday, taking Nirmalya and the newborn is also given a grain of Nirmalya to exert consciousness regarding Lord Jagannath.



- c) Every Baishnab Odia gets celestial pleasure by taking Nirmalya after bath.
- d) Before taking Nirmalya many people even do not take water.
- e) Most Odias keep Nirmalya in their worshipping bag as a protective measure against evil spirits. Even evil spirit possessed individuals are given Nirmalya, to set free from clutches of the evil spirit.
- f) It is a general belief that during the last stage of a passing soul if a grain of Nirmalya is offered to the dying soul, it attains salvation.
- g) The departed ancestors if they are offered Nirmalya on their Annual Sradha Day, they become satisfied and offer blessing to the family.

Kotha Bhog: For Kotha Bhog raw materials are supplied by the Temple Administration which costs around Rs.10,000/- per day except Gopal Ballav (Breakfast), Sakala Dhupa, Madhyahna Dhupa, Sandhya Dhupa & Bada Singhara Bhog. These are Raja Bhog offered at Ratna Singhasan. Different Mathas located around the Temple make provision for supply of Bhog raw materials daily.

Gopal Ballav or the Breakfast items served:

1. Nadia Pati, 2. Gua Lahuni, 3. Dahi (Curd) 1 pot, 4. Ballav Khai., 5. Nadia Kora, 6. Khua Manda (Cream candid milk), 7. Rambha (Banana) and 8. Guda Kora.

Sakala Dhupa (Morning meal):

9. Ada Pachedi, 10. Mahadei, 11. Saga, 12.

Tachi Khechedi (Hotchpotch), 13. Bada Pitha, 14. Nadi, 15. Kakatua, 16. Hansa Keli, 17. Jenamani, 18. Matha Puli, 19. Enduri, 20. Kanlapuli, 21. Takua, 22. Saga (spinach), 23. Kanti.

Madhyahna Dhupa (Mid-day meal):

24. Matha Puli, 25. Bhatapuri, 26. Odia Thali, 27. Suari, 28. Bada, 29. Muga Paiti, 30. Maricipani, 31. Bada Khirisa, 32. Bundia, 33. Satapatia Pitha, 34. Khaira Chula, 35. Khiri (Suji pudding), 36. Tipuri, 37. Bundia Khiri, 38. Chhena Khirisa, 39. Kanika (sweet rice).

Sandi) a Dhupa(Super):

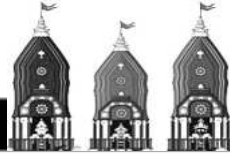
40. Matha Puli, 41. Puro Dosa, 42. Suar Pitha, 43. Chaki Amalu, 44. Keli, 45. Khudupita, 46. Manda, 47. Khuruma, 48. Suara Pitha, 49. Thali Anna.

Bada Singhara:

50. Pancha Patia Biri Pitha, 51. Khaja, 52. Mitha Pakhala, 53. Sugandhi Pakhala, 54. Parijatak, 55. Dahi Pakhala, 56. Jhadei Neda, Parakha Ghruta, Purnahuti.

Apart from all above Bhoga Mandap offering introduced by Shankaracharya, specially meant for Narayan Seva observed on special festive occasions on order. Even if items offered are popularly known as 56 items, but initially items served before Lord Jagannath during 1910 are as many as 435 varieties of items.

Oblations or items of menu offered during 1910, data collected from “The Lord of Vishnu” by Prof. Gopinath Mohapatra as mentioned below. A



comparative statement of varieties of offering Mahaprasad are given below between 1910 and 2014 a gap of one hundred and four years.

Sakala Dhupa (Lunch)

1910 items

Badakanti Mathapuli, Sanakanti, Chanda Mathapuli, Hasakeli, Kakatua Jhili, Ada Pachedi, Saga Enduri, Thali Khechedi, Oli Khechedi, Sana Khechedi, Bundia and Khiri.

2014 Items

Bada Kanti, Kanika, Tata Khechedi, Nukhura Khechedi, Mendha Mundia, Sana Kanti, Mathapuli, Chanda Mathapuli, Jhili, Hansakeli, Pithapuli, Ada Pachedi, Enduri, Saga Bhaja.

Madhyahna Dhupa (Mid-day meal)

1910 items

Suara Arisa, Dhaula, Pasupalak Dhaula, Sana Arisa, Bada Arisa, Sana Dhaula, Bada Dhaula Tripuri, Tata Nadi, Tata Manchara, Bada Kakara, Marichi Ladu, Bada Nadi, Ghia Nadi, Bada Pitha, Sana Pitha, Sara Pana, Muga Maricha, Bada Khirisa, Amruta Dugdha, Thalianna, Kadamba, Ansabasa, Subas Pakhala, Sakara, Sanagaja, Badagaja.

2014 items

Odia Anna-4 plates = 15 pots, Odia Anna - Chaka oli = 12 nos., Bhaja Muga Dali - Chaka Oli = 4 nos., Kadamba - Chaka Oli = 7nos., Kadamba - Chaka Nambari =2 nos.,

Pana (Chaka Oli) = 5 nos., Suji Khiri (Chaka Oli) = 1 no., Bada Khirisa (Chaka Oli) = 1 no., Subasita Pakhala Chaka Oli = 11 nos., Sadha Pakhala Chaka Oli= 6 nos.

Sandhya Dhupa (Night meal)

1910 items

Jhadeineda, Suara Manchara, Parijatak, Mandua, Kadali Pitha, Jenamani Pitha, Hansaballav Pitha, Mahaveer Pitha, Jhali Paka, Mathapuli, Pheni, Kantapuli, Suali.

2014 Items

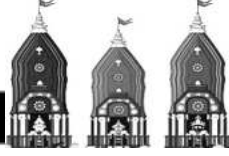
Tava Pakhala Chaka Oli=30 pots, Sakara Chaka Oli=5 nos., Suara Pitha Bada=3 nos., Suara Pitha Sana=3 nos., Mathapuli=22nos., Jhadeineda Bada Tada=1 no., Kantapuli=3 nos., Takua=4 nos., Subasa Pakhala, Kadamba.

Bada Singhara Bhog, 2014

Mitha Pakhala Chaka Oli = 10 nos of pots
Bhata Khiri Chaka Oli = 6 nos. of pots
Kanji Chaka Oli 1 no. of pot.
Kancha Ghia Chaka Oli = 1 no. of pot
Golapata (2 patia) = 5 Sara
Kadali bada = 15 nos.

On special festive days special items are offered such as on:

Makara Sankranti: Bada Kanti- 5 sara, Bada Kakera-20 nos., Marichi Ladu - 80 nos., Ladu Sana Dalimba - 12 nos., Makar Nadi- 22 nos. Tipuri - 6 nos., Nall - 8 nos., Pheni - 8 sara, Bada Jhili - 4 nos., Bada Pitha - 4nos, Puli Pitha – 4 nos., Bada/Sana Hansakeli – 8 sara, Bada Arisa - 8 nos., Sana Arisa - 8 nos.,



Sarapuli Pitha - 4nos., Atarachha Manda - 4nos., Lahunia Manda - 32nos, Bada bada -20 nos., Sanabada - 16 nos., Sara Kumpa - 4 nos, Golbada - 4 nos, Modia (Amalu) - 8 Sara, Chhena Ladu - 8 nos Sodhua - 8 Sara, Manja Kadei - 4 Sara, Bada Mahura - 8 Sara, Gota Kadali Talia - 20 nos., Ada Pachedi - 3 Sara. Kadali Bhaja - 1 Tada, Tati Bhaja -20 Sara, Makara Chausresi - (A variety of rich items like, milk, cream, khua, sugar and sainted rice).

Sri Ram Janma & Sri Krushna Janma (Jeuda Bhog):

Dayana Chori Bhog - Khiri - 14 Oli, Sana Mandua - 57, Bada Mandua - 22, Ladu Bada Dalimba - 8 nos., Adha Manohara - 9 nos., Ata Ladu - 107, Parijatak - 8 nos., Chhena Ladu - 8 nos.

Dola Utsav & Nanda Utsav Bhog:

Kanika – 10 nos, Oria 10 pots (small), Khiri - 4 Olis, Muga - 4 Olis, Bada Kanti -5 Sara, Sana Kanti - 3 Sara, Puli Pitha - 4 Sara, Bada Hansakeli - 2 Sara, Sana Hansakeli - 2 Sara, Ghinadi - 4 nos., Bada Nadi - 4 nos. Matha - 20 pcs., Bada-Sana Bada -36 pcs., Kakera -20 nos., Takua - 7 Sara.

Jatra Bhog & Madhyahna Bhog:

Pakhala - 46 Oli, Pana (sweet drink) - 16 Oli, Saga-10 Oli, Pana - 1 tada, Pana -10 Olis.

Snan Purnima, Ubha Amabasya, Adapa Mandap Bhoga :

Kanika - 20 nos., Oria - 10 Oli, Pakhala - 10 Oli, Muga - 4 Oli, Sakara - 4 Oli, Khiri - 3 Oli, Bada Kanti-5 Sara, Sana Kanti -3 Sara, Puli Pitha - 4 Sara, Bada Hansakeli - 2 Sara,

Sana Hansakeli -2 Sara, Ghinadi - 4 nos., Bada Nadi - 4 nos., Matha Puli -20 pcs., Bada Sana Bada - 36 pcs., Kakera -20 nos., Tripuri - 5 nos., Takua - 7 Saras.

Car Festival & Return Car Festival Bhog:

Khechedi - 12 nos., Saga – 5 Oli, Bhaja, Sana Kanti Bada - 5 Sara, Puli Pitha-4 Sara, Chanda Mathapuli -26 nos., Takua - 7 Sara, Kora & Khai - 4 Sara.

Jhulan yatra Bhoga :

Khiri - 5 Oli, Chaka nambari - 1, Chaki Amalu - 30 pcs.

Durga Puja- 16 days:

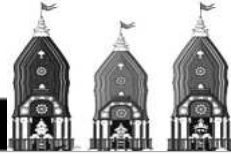
Morning Dhupa: Khechedi -4 pots, Oria -4 pots, Pakhala - 3 pots, Muga - 4 Oli, Marichi pani - 4 Oli, Sakara - 4 Oli, Adhapuli - 4 nos., Bada Kanti-2 pcs., 3 Sara, Enduri - 1 no.

Madhyahna Dhupa: Sana Jhili-12 nos., Kakera-20 nos., Marichi Ladu -9 nos., Gajamanda- 1 no., Arisa - 10nos., Bhaja- 1Oli.

Pana Sankranti & Prathamastami: Enduri-40 nos., Ghinadi-4 nos., (50 Oli)

Bakula Amabasya: Gaintha -8 nos. (7 Oli), Nadi Baula - 7 Oli, Pheni Baula- 4 Oli, Chuna Baula - 4 Oli.

Chandan Chakada Bhog: Mandua - 50 pcs. (9 Sara), 3 pcs. 67 Sara, 4 pcs - 70 Sara, Mandua Rasabali--44 pots., Badakeli - 6 nos., Chhota - 42 nos., Mandua Tikili - 160 pcs., Pana-5 Oli, Ladu - 40 nos.



Amabasya Bhog : Sana Pana -10 pots, 1 Tada Chakata Bhoga by Daitapati - 9 Angawas pots.

Chita Lagi Amabasya: Chitau- 4 pcs x 50 pots (Oli) 8 pcs x 8 Sara, Ghinadi-4 pcs x 50 pots., Satapuri Amabasya Bada Kakera - 10 pcs., Tatamuda- 21 pcs., 1/2 Tata - 16 pcs , Small Kakera- 2080 pcs, Pura Chaka Nambari - 19 nos.

Gahma Purnima & Kumar Purnima: Manda Pitha-520 nos., & a rare variety very palatable Chhatu Bhog.

Kaliya Dalan Ekadasi: Amruta Ladu (at Markanda Temple), Makhan Bhog (Labani Khia), Bana Bhoji, Besha Bhog - Sara, Khuapeda Garland.

Certain restrictions are imposed on the cooking items of vegetables which are allowed or forbidden for offering before lord Jagannath.

Bana Bhoji Besa Bhoga: Sara, Khuapeda, Garland.

Amrutamanohi Bhog:

In the worship & offerings to Lord Jagannath varieties of Rice (Anna) of sweet items are served. Manohi implies a devoted offer of food items to the Lord in a royal manner, during offering of the palatable foods, which are kept before the trinity, their simple look at the served item turns those in Amruta or nectar, hence Mahaprasad is called Amrutamanohi. Therefore, the incantation of uttered is “Amruta Naibidyam Swaha (Inscriptions of Odisha Vol.-V, Part-II, Page-563).

Lord’s kitchen is the greatest in the world located at Agnikona (Southeastern corner of the temple). As per the record of rights prepared in 1952, it has 240 ovens installed in 11 parts. The whole cooking is fully based on tantric process.

A list of permissible vegetables & fruits suitable for Mahaprasad:

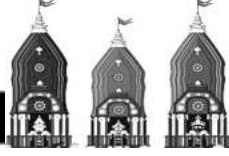
Yam (ଦେଶି ଆଳୁ), Pumpkin (କଖାରୁ), Bringal (ବାଇଗଣ), Plantain (କଞ୍ଚା କଦଳୀ), Sweet Potato (କନ୍ଦମୂଳ), Ridge Gourd (ଜହ୍ନି), Coriander leaf (ଧନିଆ ପତ୍ର), Green Jack (ପଣସ କଠା), Parwal (ପୋଟଳ), Radish (ମୂଳା), Becons (ଶିମ), Arum (ସାଉଁ), Grapes (ଅଜୁର), Mango (ଆମ୍ବ), Apples (ସେଓ), Oranges (କମଳା), Banana (କଦଳୀ), Wood apple (କଇଥ), Carambola (କରମଙ୍ଗା), Cucumber (କାକୁଡ଼ି), Raisin berry (ଖୁସ୍‌ମିସ୍), Pomegranate (ଡାଳିମ୍ବ), Tamarind (ତେନ୍ତୁଳି), Coconut (ନଡ଼ିଆ), Jackfruit (ପାଚିଲା ପଣସ), Guava (ପିଚୁଳି), Jujube (ବରକୋଳି), Almond (ବାଦାମ), Pineapple (ସପୁରି), Dates (ଖଜରା), Roseberry (ଗୋଲାପଜାମ୍ବ).

A list of vegetables forbidden for offering:

Potato (ଆଳୁ), Tomato (ଟମାଟର), Tunip (ଓଲକୋବି), Bitter (କଲରା), Spinage (ଖଡ଼ାଶାଗ), Spinach (ପୋଇଶାଗ), Cauliflower (ଫୁଲକୋବି), Cabagges (ବନ୍ଧାକୋବି), Ladies finger (ଭେଣ୍ଡି), Groud (ଲାଉ), Papayas (ଅମୃତଭଣ୍ଡା), Carrot (ଗାଜର), Runner bean (ବିନ୍), lemon (ଲେମ୍ବୁ), cashew nuts (ଲଙ୍କାମଞ୍ଜି) etc.

Divinity of Mahaprasad; importance of Universal Brotherhood:

Due to its sanctity, the rich and the poor, the high priest and an ordinary individual take Mahaprasad sitting together on the same



altar. It enables a feeling of fraternity, equality and eternity among all. Sir John Woodroft says “during the cakra all eat, drink and worship together. There being no distinction of caste, offering before Param Brahma Jagannath is divine, it cannot be impure.” In Nirvan Tantra. Pranatosini below sloks is important.

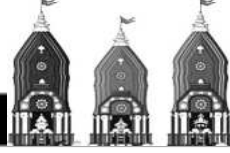
“ଗଙ୍ଗାତୋୟେ ଶିବାଦୈତ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗଦୋଷୋଽପି ବର୍ତ୍ତତେ
ପରଂବ୍ରାହ୍ମାପିତେ ଦ୍ରବ୍ୟେ ସ୍ୱଷ୍ଟା ସ୍ୱଷ୍ଟା ନଦୃଶ୍ୟତି
ନାତ୍ର ବର୍ଣ୍ଣବିଚାରୋଽସ୍ତି ନୋଽଛିନ୍ନାଦି ବିଚାରଣଂ
ନ କାଳ ନୟନୋଽଷ୍ୟତ୍ର ଶୈବାଶୈତଂ ତଥୈବତ୍
ମହାପାତକ ସ୍ୱଚ୍ଛୋ ଚାନ୍ୟପତାକୈଃ
ସକୃତପ୍ରସାଦ ଗ୍ରହଣାନ୍ମୁତ୍ୟତେ ନାତ୍ର ସାଂସୟଃ”

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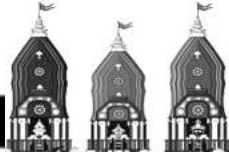
Purushottama Jagannath in Shree Mandir

Dr. Janmejy Choudhury

Odisha, the ninth largest Indian state by area and the 11th largest by population, borrows its name from Sanskrit's Odra Desa or Odra Vishya (literally, land of Odra). The original inhabitants of the land were called Odakka (in Pali) and Odra (in Sanskrit). A 15th century wall inscription on a Puri temple calls it Odisha Rajya, a land whose history can be traced back to the Lower Paleolithic Age and later to the famous Kalinga kingdom where the decisive Kalinga War was fought. The region is also called Utkal and is mentioned in India's national anthem "Jana Gana Mana". Since 1135, Cuttack was the capital of Odisha which was later shifted to Bhubaneswar in 1948. Today, Odisha is on the must-going list of every traveler, And for a myriad reason. For the devout, there is one essential pilgrimage- to the temple of Lord Jagannath in Puri which is often said having the world's largest kitchen. On this fascinating landscape, their lives Lord Jagannath. His Rath Yatra is one of the largest spectacles on Earth. Its origin and its subsequent development, which saw the introduction of

the title Jagannath (Lord of World) and the rise of this God to the position of the state deity of Odisha and even to the most important Vaisnava deity in Eastern India.

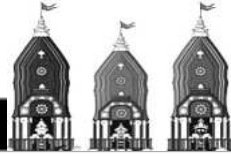
The application of the term Jagannath to Visnu in his particular manifestation in Puri occurs for the first time in the inscriptions of Bhanudeva II in the early 14th century. The title becomes a name and it is exclusively used for the Puri God. Prior to the end of the 13th century or more precisely prior to 1278 A.D. the God in Puri was called Purushottama. There occurred important changes in the culture of the God and His outer appearance also changed drastically. But, nevertheless, it is certain that Jagannath was Purushottama in Puri, carrying on a tradition which was surprisingly open to change within its strong flow of general continuity. The Jagannath temple in a strict sense of the term (after 1300 A.D) is distinguished by its ritual images made of wood and representing Jagannath, Subhadra and Balabhadra, often with the addition of the Sudarshan-Cakra to



complete the fourfold form (Chaturddhamurti) of the God. But these combined wooden images did not initially belong to Purushottama temple. Nor was the combination compulsive. The Wooden God was also installed in temples without his brother and sister, all by Himself and this was probably an earlier aspect of the Wooden God. His name, when alone, was Dadhivaman. The origin and meaning of this name are as yet unknown. The Jagannath culture is of tribal origin. The legend of the Puri temple, the Indradyumna legend, narrates that the deity was originally worshipped by the aboriginal Sabara chief Biswabasu in the woods and, only later on miraculously appeared in Puri. Accordingly, the wooden figures still display what seems to be a “tribal Look”. The wooden figures may be called ‘Crud’ and certainly differ considerably from the images worshipped in other great Hindu temples which correspond exactly to the described iconographical canons. As in other legends relating to Hinduized culture, the extraordinary appearance of the figures is related to the will of the deity himself. When the sacred log appeared in Puri, nobody could carve it. Finally Jagannath appeared as a feeble old carpenter, who was invited by King. The divine carpenter undertook the task to carve the figures, on the condition of not being disturbed. The Queen Gundicha could not restrain herself, she peeped in, and so the figures remained unfinished. The tribal origin of the figures is emphasized by the existence of a special group of priest, the Daitas, who are thought to be the descendants of the original tribal worshippers. The Daitas are called the

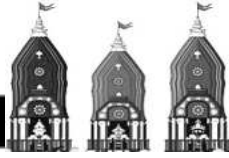
‘relatives’ of Lord Jagannath and supposed to be the descendants of the aboriginals in the Odia legends who worshipped the God in the beginning. The peculiar shape of the wooden figures is certainly a result of their tribal origin but, as has been shown, not because such figures are typical of tribal religion, but because such figures are typical products of the process of Hinduization. At a certain stage, the original uninominal symbol is anthropomorphized in order to comply basically with the needs of Hindu image. ‘Daru Devata’ of Beni Madhab Padhi says, that an aboriginal worship of trees developed into the worship of wooden figures. He presents a comprehensive description of the aboriginal referred to by the texts and emphasizes their role against the invasions of Aryans and Dravidians. It is a great attempt to point out the significance and the impact which the tribal culture has had within Hindu culture. However, the reconstruction of tribal history remains in large parts hypothetical, because he mainly relies on Hindu texts, rather neglecting other historical evidence and the tradition of the aboriginal groups themselves.

The Jagannath figures differ from each other. Subhadra, the smallest of the three, consists of a trunk and a head, and thus corresponds to the Sakta type of iconographical Hinduization. The figures, Jagannath and Balabhadra, basically also consist of a trunk and an over dimensional head. But, in addition, they have arm stumps and are considerably greater in size. The heads of Balabhadra and Subhadra are similar oval in shape, and with almond-shaped eyes. As opposed to this, the head of Jagannath



has a very curious shape. It is flat on the top, and moreover dominated by enormous round eyes. Purushottam has Tantric elements in his character, but they are mainly evident in his amorous relationship to his wife kamala. The extraordinary importance for the Jagannath cult has been repeatedly remarked upon. "Narasimha" is the guardian deity of the temple and all the performances beginning from cooking to Puja are preceded by offering to Narasimha first". During the period of anabasara when Jagannath cannot be seen because of His illness, the main worship is offered to Narasimha. The iconography of Jagannath can be explained convincingly as derived from Ekapada Bhairava. Historically, it can be confirmed that the worship of Ekapada Bhairava in Odisha was widespread and flourishing in the Bhaumakara and Somavamsi Age. This change came in the Ganga period about the turn of the 12th and 13th century. It is a change which coincides with the major breakthrough of Visnuism in coastal Odisha with the final conversion of the ruling Ganga dynasty to the Vaisnava faith and with the full inclusion of the culture of the wooden God into Visnuism. Balabhadra, known as Sankarsana, is indeed considered as representing Siva already in the early Vaishnava literature. He is considered as Lord Siva in Puri itself up to the present day. Subhadra has iconographically a different origin. Theologically She may have been related to Bhairava at an early stage. Being His Sakti She stands at His left side. She retained this position, which is that of the wife of Lord Siva till today. And till today She is considered as Durga Bhubaneswari with

whose mantra She is worshipped. Both Her position and Her Mantra prove that She is associated with Bhairava rather than with Narasimha. In the course of the Pancharatra reinterpretation She was renamed as Subhadra and officially considered as the sister of Balabhadra and Jagannath. Her original status as consort of the Wooden God was also preserved in some Vaisnava traditions, where She was conceived of as Goddess Laxmi, the wife of Lord Jagannath Purushottam. In the Ratna Simhasan there are seven deities such as Balabhadra, Subhadra, Jagannath, Sudarshan, Sridevi, Bhudevi and Nilamadhab. Jagannath temple is originally meant for two deities called Jagannath and Laxmi. In the latter stage Laxmi has been renamed as Subhadra. Balabhadra is also a later addition in the temple. Subhadra in the Jagannath temple is also worshipped as Bhubaneswari. Moreover, as per the description of 'Sarada Tilaka', Laxmi sitting on the lap or left thigh of Purushottama is reported to be yellow, which is also bodily colour of Subhadra, the possibility of Subhadra having been associated with Purushottama Jagannath originally as His wife rendered very likely. But Bhubaneswari stotram clearly mentions that She is the consort of both Lord Siva and Vishnu, and She is the cause of this Universe (jagat). Hence Subhadra is not only Laxmi She is also Ambika. Balabhadra is accepted as Siva and this Saiva worship has been assimilated with Visnu worship and Sakti worship in Jagannath temple. Siva worship in Odisha is also old as Vishnu worship. Baladeva was the head of the Nagas. God Siva is also intimately associated with the Nagas.

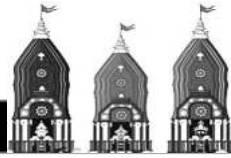


The new relations between the Jagannath culture and kingship in Odisha found their lasting manifestation in construction of the present monumental Jagannath temple in the middle of the 12th century and culminated in the ritual dedication of Odishan Empire to Lord Jagannath in early 13th century. Only this recognition of Jagannath as the ‘King of the Odisha Empire’ under who’s ever lordship henceforward the king ruled as his deputy. The rule of the Somavamsis in Central Odisha was a short but a brilliant one. During the late 11th and early 12th century the Somavamsis were threatened by the powerful dynasties of the Gangas of Kalinga and the Palas of Bengal. This struggle was finally decided in favour of the Gangas when Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva (1077-1147), by far the most powerful ruler of his age in Eastern India, conquered Central Odisha and laid the foundation stone of the rule of the “Imperial Gangas” who dominated this region for more than three hundred years. Chodaganga’s foremost deed in this respect was the construction of the monument temple at Puri. This devotional reverence for Purushottam aimed both at the stabilization and legitimating of his royal power over Central Odisha which by that time had become the “domain” of the God Purushottam. Jagannath under the Somavamsi had remained subsidiary Rastradevata. Chodaganga now raised his royal patronage of Purushottama clearly on an imperial level. It was only under King Anangabhima Deva III (1211-1228) that the God Purushottama at Puri became the official state deity of the Ganga Empire. This

important event in the history of kingship ideology was most probably directly linked with the formation of the present Jagannath triad. Though Anangabhima Deva mentioned the Purushottama triad only in 1237, he dedicated his empire to Purushottama already in 1230, when, for the first time he called himself a son of Purushottama. The Purushottama triad is mentioned for the first time with the names Halin, Cakrin and Subhadra.

In 1435, after the rule of the weak Ganga king Bhanudeva IV, Kapilendra Deva (1435-1467) had founded the powerful Suryavamsi dynasty under which the Odisha Empire reached its Zenith. As an usurper of the Gajapati throne Kapilendra Deva needed a special legitimation. As a ruler over a kingdom which had been ritually dedicated to Jagannath about two hundred years ago, it was obvious that Kapilendra Deva would try to revive the ideology of the divine mission of the Gajapatis as deputies of Jagannath. One can thus conclude, it was only after Chodaganga, when the Jagannath culture had definitely been elevated to imperial level and Visnuism became more and more dominant in Odisha, that the theology of the Puri deities could be systematically developed. This time was influenced by the third and the most important wave of Visnuism which entered Odisha at the time of Chodaganga Deva.

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Bathing Ceremony of Puri Trinity

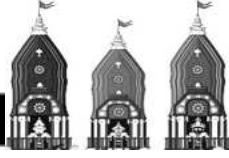
Prof (Dr.) Pradip Kumar Panda

Of all the festivals of Lord Jagannath, the Snana Yatra or the bathing ceremony is an important festive occasion. This festival is held during the juncture of summer and rainy season, i.e. the summer season is likely to disappear and the rainy season is likely to appear. Human activities and culture are reflected in Jagannath cult and as such Lord Jagannath feels the pain and pleasure like human beings. Therefore, He feels the scorching heat in summer and to get relief from such heat the deities in Puri temple are brought to the bathing altar where the servitors pour on them the cold aromatic water to make them feel cooled. This ritual is known as Snana (bathing) ceremony. Like human beings the deities also, after excessive bath, fall ill and take rest for a fortnight during which period they are under Ayurvedic treatment to be cured of disease.

Amid tight security the ceremonial bathing ritual of Lord Jagannath is celebrated at the Jagannath temple in Puri in the presence of thousands of people. The 'Snana Jatra' ceremony of the three deities

– Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra – is witnessed by people, drawn from across the state and outside, at the 'Snana Mandap' (bathing altar) as priests pour 108 pitchers of sacred water on them. The bathing ritual is celebrated as a run-up to the annual 'Rath Jatra' (car festival) of Lord Jagannath. The day, the full-moon day of the month of 'Jyestha', is considered to be the birthday of Lord Jagannath. The legend from the Skanda Purana says that King Indradyumna, who installed the wooden deities of the Lords, bathed the deities before they were worshipped in the 12th century shrine. The Lord's bathing also indicates arrival of monsoon in Odisha.

In the morning, the deities along with the image of 'Sudarshana' are taken out from the sanctum sanctorum in a procession to the bathing altar, located in the temple premises. After the bathing ritual, the deities are attired with 'Gajanana Vesha' (elephant dress). Lord Jagannath takes the elephant attire to please his Maharastrian devotees who worship Lord Ganesh.



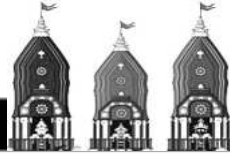
Deva Snana Purnima also known as ‘**Snana Yatra**’ is an auspicious bathing festival for Lord Jagannath devotees. It is observed on the ‘Purnima’ (full moon day) of the ‘Jyeshtha’ month in the traditional Hindu calendar. Deva Snana Purnima is a significant ritual just prior to the world renowned Rath Yatra of the **Jagannath Temple**, in Puri. During this ritualistic bathing ceremony, the deities of the Jagannath Temple, are worshipped with full devotion and dedication. The ceremony is observed in a traditional way with full grandeur and is also one of the most anticipated rituals of the Lord Jagannath Temple. Some even observe this festival as the birthday of Lord Jagannath. Devotees from different parts of the country come and witness this unique event.

On the day of Jyeshtha Purnima, the idols of Lord Balabhadra, Lord Jagannath and Devi Subhadra are taken out from the ‘Ratnasimhasan’ of the Jagannath Puri Temple, early in the morning. The idols are escorted in a procession that is witnessed by thousands of devotees, and brought to the ‘Snana Bedi’ or the Bathing altar. This procession is called as ‘Pahandi’ procession that is brought alive with the sounds of chanting mantras and beat of ghantas, drums, bugles and cymbals. The water used for bathing the deities is taken from the well, present inside the Jagannath Temple. Prior to the bathing ceremony, few puja and rituals are performed by the priests. A total of 108 pitchers of herbal and aromatic water are used to bath the three main deities of the Jagannath Temple.

After the completion of the bathing ceremony, the deities are then dressed up in ‘Sada Besha’. Later in the afternoon, the idols of Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra are dressed again as ‘Hathi Besha’ (as a form of Lord Ganesha). A special Bhog is prepared as offering to the Lord on the day of Deva Snana Purnima. Again in the evening, the deities appear for ‘Sahanamela’, to enable public viewing.

Later during the night, the three main deities retire to the ‘Anasar’ House, located in the temple complex. During the ‘Anasara’ period, the devotees cannot see their Gods. The idols of Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra then appear for public viewing only 15 days after, that is, the day just before the famous Rath Yatra.

The festival of Deva Snana Purnima holds immense religious significance for Lord Jagannath devotees. According to the Hindu legends, it is believed that during the ritualistic Snana Yatra, the deities get fever and take 15 days solitary confinement. The idols appear for public viewing, only after getting reenergized. As mentioned in the ‘Skanda Purana’, King Indradyumna arranged this bathing ceremony for the first time, after the deities were installed in the Jagannath Temple. The devotees of Lord Jagannath believe that by merely getting the ‘darshan’ of their lord on the day of Deva Snana Purnima, will free them from all their sins of present and past lives. Thousands and thousands of devotees, visit the Puri Jagannath Temple for this occasion, every year.



It is a belief among devotees of Lord Jagannath that if they make a pilgrimage to see the deity on this day, they would be cleansed of all of their sins. Hundreds of thousands of devotees visit the temple on the occasion. On the eve of the Snana Yatra (Which means the Bathing festival, in Sanskrit), the idols of the deities are brought out in a grand procession from the Garbhagriha (sanctum sanctorum) to the Snana Bedi (bathing platform). Devotees come to view the deities.

On the day of the Snana Yatra, the deities are bathed with 108 pots, made of gold, of ritually purified water drawn from the northern well of the temple to the accompaniment of religious incantations. In the evening, at the conclusion of the bathing ritual, Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are dressed up in elephant headgear representing the God Ganesh. This form of the God is called the 'Gajavesha'

After the Snana Yatra the Gods are traditionally believed to fall ill and are kept in a sick room to recuperate in privacy under the care of the Raj Vaidya, the Royal Physician of the king of Puri. It is said that with the Ayurvedic medication ('panchan') administered by the Raj Vaidya, the Gods recover in a fortnight and resume giving an audience to their devotees.

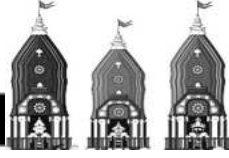
On the full moon day of Snana Purnima the deities are decorated with beautiful Vesha known as Gajanana Vesha or Hati Vesha. There is a legend behind this Vesha. Sri Ganapati Bhatta a great devotee of Lord Ganesha from South India came to

Puri to see Lord on the day of Snan Purnima. On the auspicious day he however could not see Lord Ganesha on the Snana Mandap. He was disappointed. But Lord Jagannath is great, He is *antaryami*, He could know the heart of His devotee. On order to appease the desire of Ganapati Bhatta, Lord manifested Himself in the form of Lord Ganesha. Since that day this Vesha is being observed on the day of Snana Purnima.

As per Skanda Purana, when Raja Indradyumna installed the wooden deities, he arranged this bathing ceremony, and hence, the day is celebrated to bathe the trinity. While Puri attracts thousands of visitors this day, the festival is celebrated in other parts of Odisha as well. The idols of Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra, and Lord Balabhadra are taken out from the Ratnasimhasan of the Jagannath Puri Temple, early in the morning. These idols are brought to the snana bedi or the bathing altar.

However, during the period of Anasara, people visit Lord Alarnath temple located at Brahmagiri, a few miles away from Puri. Lord Alarnath is considered Lord Vishnu (Lord Jagannath). The devotees get darshan of Lord Alarnath as Lord Jagannath. During this fort-night period devotees throng Lord Alarnath temple without visiting Puri temple and get blessings from Lord Alarnath.

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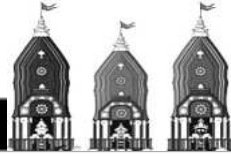
The Form of Sri Jagannath : The Symbol of Universal Consciousness

Dr. Alekha Charan Sahoo

Sri Jagannath Kshetra or Puri enjoys its glory by many names i.e., Purusotam Kshetra, Sankhakshetra, Niladridham, Purusottam Kshetra, Sri Kshetra, Jamanika Kshetra, Martyabaikuntha Kshetra etc. Puri is heaven in the earth. All religious people like Jaina, Buddhist, Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shakta, Ganapatya, Saurya etc. claim Sri Jagannath is of their God. In the Puri temple at the entrance door, Sri Jagannath is presented as one of the ten incarnations of lord Vishnu. As Nath title is linked with Jagannath, the Jainas claim Jagannath is as like as Parsvanath, Adinath, Naminath, etc. Sri Jagannath is worshipped in the form of Vishnu like Rama, Krishna and other gods of ten incarnations. The Shaivites say Jagannath as Mahabhairava. The Shaktas say Jagannath as Mahakala, she is a female deity because he uses a nose ornament in his nose. Likewise, Jagannath is decorated in the form of Sri Ganesh, He is associated with Saurya known as Suryanarayan. It has brought all essence from Islamic, Christian, Sheikh, Sai etc. Even before arrival of Jesus

Christ in Puri, the Puri Kshetra was well known as one of the Vaishnavite seats known as Purusottam Kshetra. So much so, even before the visit of Chinese traveler, Hiuen Tsang in 638 A.D. Puri was known as a holy place. Thus due to the holiness of Puri different noted saints like Sankaracharya, Madhavacharya, Ramananda, Kabir, Ramanuja, Guru Nanaka, Sri Chaitanya, Ballabhacharya, Tulasidas, Panchasakha etc. rushed to Puri and settled sometime and established their monasteries which are some way related with the rituals of Sri Jagannath in different occasions.

Before we discuss the image of Sri Jagannath, let us discuss the Universal Culture. The derivation of the word 'Culture' indicates equality in achievement, equality in manner, expression of colourful form and spirit, sensational visual and performing activities. In other words, the existence of human society in the social, spiritual and political dimensions (the reflection of total human spirit). From very beginning, culture has taken a variety of expressions,

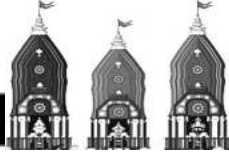


dimensions and kind. Many cultures have been generated in different parts of the world but merged with the mainstream of mother culture as small waves which generated in the sea, but merged from where it came from. In the Universal culture, socialism, Christianity, Islamic and Hinduism are of the four distinguished groups have accepted the real motto of humanism, but Sri Jagannath culture is the amalgamation of all universal cultures and unique. It is not concerned with a single person, sect, caste and creed. No doubt it is generated in one region but has become universal.

All the above-mentioned saints have established their own philosophy, religion and culture but the Jagannath culture is so vast, even the king of Puri designate himself as Raut (Raita or deputy). During the time of Anangabhimadeva, he ruled his kingdom on behalf of Lord Purusottama. Later on, during the time of Anangabhimadeva III and Bhanudeva II (1306- 1328 A.D.), of Ganga dynasty called Purusottama as 'Sri Jagannath'.

Today, as soon as the science and technology are developing rapidly, science does not care to march on the way of devastation declaring war, cruelty, complexity, superiority, smash the nature, break down the Godly framed system. But there is no other culture other than the Sri Jagannath Culture to save the entire human world and Godly gifted nature. It is the torch bearer of harmony, peace, equality, discipline and international brotherhood.

Sri Chaitanya calls Jagannath Purusottama as "Jugala Murtti" of Radha and Krishna, and followed "Jugal Gayatri mantra", both are one and inseparable, male and female. So, His association with goddess Lakshmi as 'Radha and Krishna'. After all he says "Tume dekha nari purush, ami dekhi sudui manush" (Means people makes difference between male and female, but I consider both as one human being, i.e., supurush (superhuman being, almighty, supreme authority, absolute.) Generally, Jagannath is thought of as one God, but he is not worshipped by one name. He is worshipped by many names and forms as 'Patitapaban' or 'Dadhibamana' while on the altar or vedi or ratnavedi with his brother and sister and Sudarshan. He is a synthetic form of many gods, many colours, dimensions and rhythms. All four gods and goddess are united. Hands are wider and extended frontally for unending searches to embrace and uplift his devotees who is down-trodden, hopeless and sick. These four deities represent four Vedas i.e., Rig, Sam, Yajru and Atharva having four primary and significant colours- Balabhadra (white), Jagannath (black), Subhadra (yellow) and Sudarshan (red). These are vibrant and contrast. In the dark background of garbhagriha with little light of the oil lamp, these colours dazzle and look brighter from a long distance. Black indicates vastness, darkness, unending, Bhairava, mahakala, aghora, white indicates purity having the capacity of retaining all colours, yellow indicates happiness, sunshine and nature and red represents auspiciousness, victory, love,



vigor, life, health, courage etc. These three gods are sought for – Subhadra- Creation, Jagannath- Preservation and Balabhadra- Destruction as trinity gods i.e., Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesvara. They are also sought for four disciplines of human life i.e. dharma, artha, kama and moksha.

Association of Jagannath with Vimala makes the entire complex sacred, gives liberation (moksha) to all the universal people when the Prasad of Jagannath first offered to Vimala it becomes Mahaprasad. Further when Jagannath goes for boat journey (chandan yatra) his two consorts i.e., Sri Devi and Bhudevi are accompanied with Madan Mohan. In the ratna vedi they are presented on either side of Jagannath. Sridevi (Lakshmi) is made of gold or jewel, but Bhudevi (Saraswati) made of silver. It is nothing but play of Prakriti and Purusha, a composite image which is seen in many cases like Lakshmi- Narayana, Radha-Krishna, Sita-Rama, Sada-Siva, Rama-Balarama, Surya-Narayana etc. which indicates unity in diversity, friendship, play of creation, progress, peace and international brotherhood.

Further, most of the world Gods and Goddesses are seen to have been made of either in stone or metal, whereas the image of Sri Jagannath is made of wood. Its prime cause reminds the manner of worshipping the tree in the ancient days. In course of time tree worship was transformed into wood worship. When man was roaming in the woodland for search of food and shelter, tree became his lifeline for survival. Even

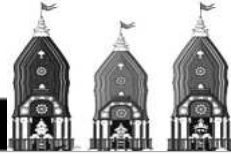
today we can't live without tree. Many pillars were installed by the emperor Ashoka such as Lauriya Nandangarh lion capital, Rampurwa Bull capital, Sarnath Ashoka pillar etc. From the copper plate of Tustikar Dev (5th-6th Centuries) it is known that he was an ardent follower of Stambheswari Devi. As such Dinesh Ch. Sarkar says that Stambheswari Devi was the Kula devata of Sulki dynasty of Kalahandi. Moreover, Stambheswari is a non- Aryan Tribal deity of Odisha it represents Siva and Shakti. In different tribal societies in the world are seen to have worshipped trees. In Odisha, there are references of wooden goddess (kathi devata and Khambeswari. In the tribal societies it is worshipped as Dharni Penu, or Dharti Penu. Each tribe has a village deity made of either wood or stone.

In the Rig. Veda, the oldest text, in the sloka of 155 mandala I says that:

'Adojadharu plabate Sindhoh Pare Apurusam

Tadardhaswa Druhano Tena Gachha Parastharam'

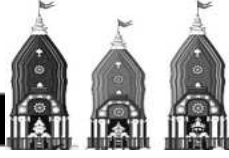
In the Indian Culture, the tree worship is very common. Today we worship Aswatha, pippala, neem, dhatri, tulasi, bela, sahada, brahmamuli, sami, bara etc. Most of the trees having medicinal values. To obtain child, people do worship trees right from the time immemorial. Its examples are seen from the Indus Valley Civilization. Then in different ages, Maurya, Sunga, Kushan Gupta and Medieval period many gods and goddesses are seen with trees. Sanchi, Bharhut, Mathura, medieval temples like



Lingaraj, Rajarani, Konark and Khajuraho, Yakshinies are seen in different form in different names like Salabhanjika, Brukshadevi, Urvaradevi, Nupura Padika, Darpani, Putra Ballabha, Dalabankudi, Mugdha, Torani Manini Sukasarika, Mardali Vinabadini Padmini Gunthana, Putra Ballava, Surasundari etc. In India, the Hindu people give their children's name from the different trees, fruits and flowers such as Kadambari, padmni, Baula, hena, ketaki, dalimba, mali, champa, baula, Tulasi, bela, malati, tamala etc. In the Sarala Mahabharat, the marriage of Gandhari with Dhritarastra is linked with 'sahada' tree. The Mario people of Newland also worship trees. In the Aurvedic Science, the importance of different trees have been narrated for having their medicinal value. Gautam Buddha had obtained nirvana sitting under the tree of Buddha Gaya. The Peeppal tree also associated with Mahavira Jina. After the Vedic age, in the Puranic age- The Mahabharata, Brahma purana, Matsya purana, Bhavisya purana, Garuda purana, Skanda purana, Srimad Bhagabat Mahapurana etc. there are description of trees. In the Fifteenth chapter of the Gita, the Human body is compared with the inverted tree (olata bruksha). Thus it proves that the worshipping of tree in the world is pretty old. So much so, the image of Sri Jagannath in neem wood is justified. Because the tree has medicinal value and the insects hardly bite and lasts long.

These four deities- Balabhadra, Jagannath, Subhadra and Sudarshan represent the four colors of the entire world people i.e., white, black, yellow and Copper

respectively. All these colours are mostly primary and contrast by nature. As India is a tropical country, throughout the year the people enjoy bright colours and bright light, so using the bright, contrast colours for these deities is justified. The colours, either of vegetable or mineral origin, were hengula, red, sudha (conch shell) white, kajjala, black, harital, yellow. The style of application of colour is just like Patta chitra. According to the pigment theory, combination of all colours, the result is black and according to the spectromic colour theory, combination of all colours, the result is white. Both black and white indicates vastness of the goddesses. The whole universe is within the image of Sri Jagannath. All colours are merged in the black colours. Thus whosoever comes under the feet of Sri Jagannath, he embraces him as his own children. So, there is equality, independence, brotherhood and to see and accept everybody as his own children. All these natures are universal for all eyes. He is Mahakala like Bhairava, He is the beginner and ender. The form of Sri Jagannath is unique. It is neither an abstract form nor a semi abstract form, neither realistic nor semiotics. It is neither a sculpture nor a painting, it is an absolute form which has no smell, no colour, no human form as referred in the Silpa texts like Vishnudhamottara purana, Brihatsamhita, Sukranitisara, Narada silpa, Saraswati silpa etc. still then it has become as god of the universe. To satisfy the devotees of all sects, once in a year during the time of Sri Gundicha yatra he comes out



with his brother and sister. He stretches his hands widely and attracts his people in his globular eyes. Everybody can seat together to share their meal from a beggar to a king. This is the highness of Sri Jagannath. His name signifies equality, the god of the whole universe. Buddha, Jaina, Shaiva, Shakta, Vaishnava, Ganapatya, Saurya claim Sri Jagannath as their own god. He is one, created the universe, when desire arose in his heart and He became many. There is a corresponding aspiration in the many, through the Sangharsa or pain, of the world existence, to become one, to merge into the Supreme.

According to the universal brotherhood on the one altar, Sri Jagannath, Subhadra and Balabhadra are worshipped as there is unity and relationship pronouncing “Basudhaiba Kutumbakam”- means the whole universe is one family. He is not confined within a particular religion or sect. Throughout the year he is adorned with different beshas to deliver the message of integrity, unity, strength, beauty, pleasure and dimension like Badasimhara, Padma, Adakia, Thiakia, Kaliyadalana, Nagarjuna, Raghunath, Gajanan, Suna Besha, Ramabalarama, Banabhoji etc.

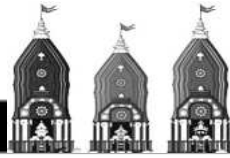
The image of Sri Jagannath seems as unfinished one. Either the artist has been failed to conceptualise the form of such an Universal god within his limitation or it is a complete one beyond the knowledge of the earthly men. Its body has no limb. Only the globular eye without the eyebrow and spreading of two wider hands without palm

and fingers, his eyes are known as chakanayana, hands are mahabahu, there is little suggestion of lip, without ear are more suggestive and symbolic as like as the abstract form of art of Brancusi and Picasso. The artist expresses unlimited within the limits. Thus once Michel Angelo said: “Good painting is copy of the perfection of God..... It is a music of a melody which only intellect can understand”. Further Leonardo da Vinci has said that “a great work of art is not enjoyed by a simple naked eye”. Thus the creator of this image is none other than Sri Jagannath. The greatness and the picturesque vision was beyond the knowledge of earthly man. To appreciate, a work of art, a great philosopher, Clive Bell said “To appreciate a work of art we need to bring with us nothing from life. No knowledge of idea and affairs. No familiarity, with its emotions. Only significant form”. So much so, Hegel identified “form with intuition, which in its own turn is a synonym for expression”.

Moreover this is the high time to understand the philosophy and picturesque expression of Sri Jagannath to establish noble humanism, idealism, Universal Brotherhood to generate harmony, beauty and unity as “Basudhaiba Kutumbakam” before any disorderness happens in the god gifted a beautiful pictorial canvas.

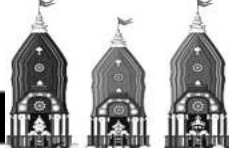
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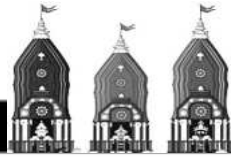
Garuda, Garuda Stambha and Sri Jagannath Temple

Kiran Jyoti Mohanty
Dr. Prafulla Chandra Mohanty

Garuda is the Hindu deity, primarily the bahana (mount) of Lord Vishnu. The divine creature is very sound in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism faiths. The mighty bird named in Sanskrit as Garuda but in Pali language it is Garula, or Galan /Nanbelu in Burmese language. In Japanese language it is Karura. In Buddhist literature Garuda is called as “astasena” and in Jainism literature it is “Jaksha”. The name Garuda symbolises the strong waist or the strength body who can fly very speedy. Garuda is a golden feathered beautiful bird who is the charioteer of Lord Vishnu-Narayan, Laxmi, the mother of this living world or of this Universe. Garuda the word comes from the coinage of “go” plus “arudha” means to be a carrier body on which God Vishnu tours. It is the bird’s back, the mount, which is used to sit and fly as a bahana (the carrier). Some linguistic scholars said that the bird, eagle like structure came from the Sanskrit word Guedhra which means a heavy bird which eats meat of all living beings. Garuda the name came from the Sanskrit name Garutaman, Garuda, Garudha and Guidhra.

The other related names of Garuda as described in Sanskrit encyclopaedia text are Garutman, Tarkshya, Bainateya, Khageswar, Nagantaka, Vishnuratha, Suparna, Pannagasana, Itymar, Mahabeer, Pakhee Singh, Uragasan, Jatadhara, Salmali, Haribahan, Amritaharana, Naga asana, Harabali, Taraswi, Tarkshya Nayak, Khagendra, Bhujangantak etc. Garuda happens to be the brother of Devas, Gandharbs, Daitya, Danavas, Nagas, Banaras and also of Jakshas. He is the son of Kasyapa and Binata. He is also the younger brother of Aruna, the charioteer of Sun God. He has a wife named Unnata and his son’s name is Sampati/Sammukha as stated in Ramayan. Regarding the birth of Garuda, a nice mythological story runs as below:

At the completion of the creation of this earth by Prajapati Brahma, it is needed to generate different kinds of living beings. In this context, Kasyapa Prajapati is in charge of generating the living beings. So as per the Brahma Baibarta purana(text) the Sage Kasyapa married seven wives and



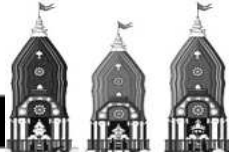
produced all kinds of living creatures starting from insects to human beings. Wife Diti gave birth to demons and human beings, wife Aditi gave birth to Devas, from Binata the birds from Kadru snakes and from Suravi the cows and buffaloes etc. Similarly, from Sarama, the dog like animals and from the seventh wife Danu gave birth to Danavas (demons) etc. Out of seven wives Kadru and Binata are two important names. Kadru, the egoistic mother who produced thousands of poisonous snakes and Binata a simple and gentle mother of two exemplary birds only like Aruna and Garuda. In Markandeya purana and also in Haribamsa, the other two Hindu texts narrate the Kasyapa Prajapati married thirteen wives named Diti, Aditi,



Danu, Vinata, Khass, Kadru, Muni, Krishna, Arista, Ira, Tamra, Eela and Pradha. After birth, Garuda wanted to fly in the sky but he realised that his mother has no independence of her own because she remained as a servant at his stepmother Kadru. As a son Garuda wanted to make free his mother from this insulted bondage. So, he consulted with his step snake brothers and his stepmother Kadru. It was decided that if



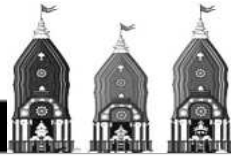
nectar (amrit) will be supplied to them, then only Binata can possibly be released from the bondage. Garuda flew to bring nectar from the heaven but he was hungry enough, so he requested his father Kasyapa for food. Kasyapa showed to an elephant (Supritika) and a turtle (Biswabasu) who were in war in a pond. In relation they happen to be the brothers but crushed by each other and quarrelling for the division of their property. Garuda lifted them by the nails of his feet and flew to the top of a big Pippal tree to eat them. But the huge branch of the tree could not bear the weight of Garuda and so broken. Garuda saw that the Rishi Balakhilya was in meditation under the tree. Fearing to



the curses of the sage Balakhilya, Garuda took the broken branch of the tree with him and again started flying to the Sumeru Mountain to eat. Garuda entered on the mountain and started eating the elephant and turtle. After eating, Garuda fled to heaven to bring Amrit Kalash (the nectar pot) which will give life forever. Anyway, he reached at the heaven but not allowed to take the nectar pot and so he faced a furious war with Indra and other warrior Gods of the heaven. At the end he defeated Indra in the war and brought Amrit (nectar) pot for Kadru. While bringing Amrit pot lord Vishnu's voice from the blue sky was heard not to give amrit to these self-oriented serpents who will harm and kill others for their own benefit and in the way the son of Indra surrendered at him and convinced Garuda to take back amrit tactfully after the release of Binata, the mother but before using the Amrit by Kadru and her sons. Garuda handed over the nectar pot to Kadru, his stepbrothers and told them to drink after completion of a sacred bath. The pot was kept on a bunch of kusha, (a type of grass used in Deva pujas or in God worshipping) as per the prior discussion. Binata, the mother of Garuda released from the bondage of servanthship and freed. In the meantime, before completion of bathing and returning to drink Amrit, the son of the Indra had taken back the pot to heaven. Serpents came to take Amrit after bathing but to that time it was not there to drink. Kadru's sons astonished by this surprisable disappearance of the Amrit pot and shocked. Out of anxiety, at the end they swallowed the kushashan (grass) on which nectar was kept with the hope of at least to touch a pinch of leaked Amrit. But instead of getting Amrit the

tongues were injured by the blade edged Kusha grasses. The hope of getting a drop of amrit was gone and instead got the blade injured bifurcated tongues. Since then, it is seen that the tongues of all the serpents (the offsprings of the mother Kadru) were remained bifurcated. This teaches a lesson that you must be good enough to receive good things but instead if you try to acquire forcefully or by playing treachery like Kadru, you can't succeed.

After completion of the great work of releasing his mother Garuda went in the high sky to do other awaiting good works. Garuda was also empowered by his father Kasyapa if needed can eat human beings except Brahmins but once. On the way he wrongly ate a Brahmin couple. After that he felt pain and burning sensation in his stomach. At the end he was compelled to vomit and release the Brahmin couple for his betterment. Later, Garuda fled to the high sky and on the way to Baikuntha on the grace he met God Vishnu who was with his armaments (sankha, chakra, gada, padma), etc. Who told him to stay with him and carry Him on his mount to move around the universe for controlling and protecting dharma, the truth and justice. Garuda, the mighty king bird accepted the proposal given by lord Vishnu-Narayan with folded hands and prayed the Jagat Kartta (creator) in a kneeling down posture and requested for a boon to be with Him all the time and be in all Vaistamba temples in a pillar like structure named Garuda Stamba. Lord Vishnu fulfilled the first worshipper devotee Garuda. Accordingly, in each and every Vaishnava temples Garuda Stamba is there

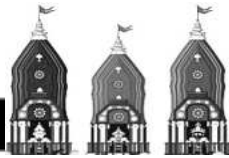


and on the pillar Garuda remains in a kneeling down position with his half flying feathers and folded hands of praying. At times Garuda image is also seen in carrying on his back Laxmi, Narayan and Bhudevi in a flying like posture. He is also granted the boon to stay on the top of the chariot Nandighosh (in car festival) as Garuda Dhawaja (the furling flag carrying an image of the Great Garuda), like Kapi-Dhwaj (hanuman flag). The powers of these flags were well illustrated in Mahabharat (episode of Karna - Arjuna war).

Some of the spiritual scholars have the opinion on the name Garuda illustrates the meeting of jibatma and paramatma. That tells jibatma is an inseparable part of paramatma which resembles the Garuda (the soul) and Vishnu the paramatma. Though Garuda is an essential devotee of Vaishnavism, he also presents in the texts of Saivism and Buddhism in the form of Garuda Tantra and Kiran Tantra. **There are different plans and procedures to defeat the enemies of self and win over them by**

following the trick mentioned as in Garuda Buiha. Therefore, most of the countries preferred the name and image of Garuda to be in their armed forces mostly Indonesia, Jakarta and India etc. are the countries who have used the brand name and image of Garuda in their air force. Hindu texts describe the iconography of Garuda as a fully grown up bird eagle and another form it is of half man and other half like a bird. The human form carries a nose, beak, legs and the enlightened two encircled eyes of an eagle but the body is of emerald the wings are golden yellow the neck is of white colour. According to the text, Garuda is depicted well in SILPARATNA SHASTRA and also in TATWANIDHITANTRA. It is also to note that the word 'Astika Garuda' itself keeps away the fear of snakes. There is a tree named Patal Garuda which has the active medicinal curing capacity to the snake bite and venom as described in our 'Ayurveda shastra'. Garuda is the master teacher of JOGO VIDYA (knowledge) which includes pranayama (controlling breathing) to different asans including Garudasan that means different poses & postures of human body. The special festivals and pujas observed for Deva Garuda on the Garuda sayana and uthapana Dwadasis, a day next two Harisayan Akadasi and Uthapana Akadasi in each baistamba temples. In Vedas, mostly the birds and animals are symbolising the lust of indriyas which are carrying to do undo things. So, it is required to sacrifice them by doing jajnas. The birds like cuckoo, owl, guidhra represents these lusts. Similarly, the sheep and dog are the animals who represent the anger and lust

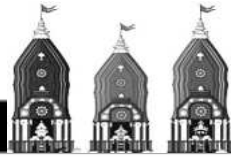




which are to be sacrificed to attain salvation. With all these qualities of the great devotee bird Garuda is not only the carrier of Lord Vishnu but also the carrier of all devotees to Lord Vishnu i.e., to reach moksha. Garuda symbol is also used for the courage and energy of a country. So, internationally some of the countries like Indonesia, India etc. are using the Garuda wings as their defence emblems mostly in Air Forces.

The pillar of Garuda remains at a distance of 175 feet to the Ratna Singhasana where saptadha murtti are worshipped. The height of Garuda Stamba is about 7 feet and the image of Garuda on the pillar is about 3 feet long. The sacred pillar is covered with two pato jatha (silk clothes) by Chunera Sebak and garlanding with the garlands of Lord Shree Jagannath, the Vishnu. Similarly, the Chunera sebayat also changes daily the patitapabana flag remained at the top of Shree mandir's blue wheel (nila chakra) of Jagannath dham. In Shree Jagannath temple of Puri, Garuda remains on a pillar in Jagamohan (Natamandir). The devotees have to see the Daru Brahma (made out of wood), the chaturddha murtti after seeing all parswa

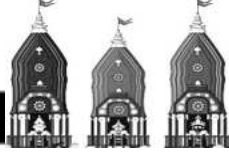
debatas (the Gods and Goddesses) present in the encircling campus of Shree Mandir. The Garuda Stambha, the pillar is made out of wood of a Udambar tree. The Udambar tree is the only tree where the bird eagle likes to reside. It is also interesting to note that where the Gods like Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarsan are made out of daru, the wood; how a bahan or the charioteer's body be made without wood or in other valuable metal jewelleryes. Some of the spiritual researchers also have an opinion that the Garuda Stambha is the main which is made out of a Salagram stone. It is also not impossible to say the wooden pillar has no Salagram in or outside the Godly Stambha. History says that Chaitanya Dev came to Shree Mandir and prayed Lord Jagannath, the Daru Brahma on embracing the pious Garuda Stambha. Similarly, the Sankaracharya also prayed the Chaturddha murtti standing behind the Garuda Stambha, the sacred pillar. Till today the fingerprints of Sankaracharya are visible on the left-hand side wall of this bhog mandap behind the Garuda Stambha. On this pillar the image of Garuda is there in one leg kneeling down posture with folded hands and looking to the feet of Lord Jagannath. If the devotees entered through Kalki Dwara (South Gate), the nearby compound there are two important temples like Lord Nursimha and Shree Ram temples. It is marked that on the top entrance of Shree Ram temple a cemented flying posture, a huge Garuda bird is in the posture of carrying Lord Ram, Lakshman, Sita and others as described in Balmiki Ramayan. Garuda is believed to be



the carrier of all Vaishnava Gods and Goddesses like Bhagwan Vishnu, Narayana, Krishna, Shree Ram, Narasingha and the other incarnated Gods of the Universe. It is seen that, the Garuda Stambha is first worshipped in the early morning at the time of opening of gates of Shree Mandir. There is a strong belief that the worshipping of Garuda Stambha by an issue-less woman devotee with a special bath to the pillar will be blessed with the issues. In our Hindu culture, the devotion, the belief on any of Superpower will not go in vain. Your positive willpower, simplicity, honesty and sincerity will bring a sure success to everybody. There are two unique pillar Gods where people go for worshipping in our Indian culture. Out of them, one in the name of Shree Aruna, the Aruna Stambha remains at present in front of Singha dwara (Lions Gate) and the other one is in the name of Garuda, the Garuda Stambha is worshipped in the Jagannath Dham of our Shree Purushottam kshetra. These Two pillar Gods

are in brotherly relation born out of the single mother Binata and the father Kasyapa Prajapati. Aruna the elder is serving the Sun God, as charioteer and the younger brother Garuda is the carrier of the Supreme God Vishnu. Really our hands are automatically folded, body is bending with bowing down our heads in front of these two creatures who are two dutiful (karma yogies) serving this universe day and night without any self-interest. Garuda the devotee God's image is present in all the Vishnu temples available in and outside the country. A man who wants to know more on Garuda and on his activities, he is to go through the Garuda Purana, a mythological scripture written by Beda Vyasa. It is one of the eighteen puranas available in Hindu religion. The Garuda



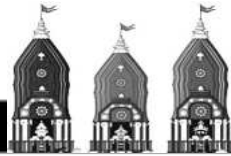


purana contains the dialogues in between Lord Vishnu and the Garuda regarding the life after death. It is the science of the soul, the Jeevatma without body, it's movement and the process of salvation. It also narrates different kind of punishments and hells to punish the wrong doers till their purification, etc. The text is divided in two parts naming Purva and Uttar khanda carrying nineteen thousand slokes in total. The first part Purva khanda has 299 chapters and the Uttar Khanda or the Preta khanda has 49 chapters which advocates on the soul after death, etc. Garuda purana is a knowledgeable and ethical book which controls and brings reform in the day-to-day activities. So, it would be better to tell Garuda, a reformer who guides every human being in the platform of bad and good activities, the good blessing full activities. Garuda tells the devotees that they should surrender at their God, who will take care of you in your present and future life and which gives to reach Nirvana or the salvation. The devotees pray Garuda the carrier eagle bird especially to acquire

significant spiritual and practical benefits of awaying negative energies, Blackmagic, and evil forces. The Prayer is: "AUM, I offer my salutations to the Great Bird with golden wings, bless me and illuminate my mind."

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Jagannath Chariot Festival: A Potent Facilitator of World Unity

Dr. Ajit Kumar Mahapatra

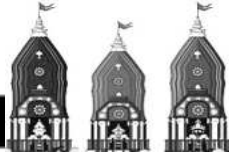
Indian parents prefer to raise their children in God consciousness. Most Indians like to live in harmony with the spiritual principles governing the Universe. Since the time immemorial, Indians have been giving priority to spirituality, studies and researches on spiritual matters pertaining to how to have a peaceful and harmonious life. The transcendental knowledge propagated by the Indian Spiritual leaders abroad has astounded great literary and academic scholars worldwide. Even today, most of the Indians firmly believe that these transcendental teachings practised by anyone in his/her daily routine way of life will surmount a lot of problems faced while living a modern complex way of life.

Famous scientists, unsuccessfully are trying hard to analyse and explain “Consciousness” by means of physical laws that govern everything else within their purview. Nobel Laureate in physiology and medicine, Albert Szent Gyorgyi, has recently said, “In my search for the secret

of life, I ended up with atoms and electrons, which have no life at all. Somewhere along the line life has run out through my fingers, so in my old age, I am retracing my steps.”

The properties of “consciousness”, its ability to exist prior to and after the destruction of physical body were inferred by the physicist Niels Bohr, a Nobel Laureate in Physics, who remarked, “We can admittedly find nothing in physics or chemistry that has even a remote bearing on consciousness. Yet, all of us know there is such a thing as consciousness simply because we have it ourselves. Hence, consciousness must be part of nature, or more generally of reality which means that quite apart from the Laws of physics and chemistry, as laid down in quantum theory, we must also consider laws of quite a different kind.”

In our holy land India, therefore, it is a deep-rooted common belief that spiritual knowledge is eternally true, and does not change with each new scientific



theory. It is still relevant to today's way of modern living and life style.

The Geeta and Vedic literatures are instruction manuals that teach and guide every Indian in life's journey. The Geeta guides Lord Krishna instructing, "From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of trials and tribulations, where repeated birth and death take place. But, one who attains to "My Abode" never takes birth again."

In an attempt to reach out to: "His Abode" as said and mentioned supra, people, not only of India, but also far away from other foreign countries arrive at Puri, on pilgrimage, a holy shrine, known as Shreekshetra, the "holy abode" of Lord of the Universe, Jagannath.

Shreekshetra Puri is one among the four divine abodes (Four Dhams) of India. Puri is considered unparalleled so far as world's cultural and spiritual traditions are concerned. During the Chariot Festival, the presiding deity Jagannath, along with elder brother Lord Balabhadra and sister Devi Subhadra come out of the temple to mingle, associate with the common mass. And also, the common people take part in the grand ceremonial journey of the Trinity from the temple to the destination Gundicha. This is a unique event to show how the Presiding Deity mixes with the crowd of people, gathered in the broadest Grand Road of Puri, oblivious of caste, creed and religious faith. This doesn't happen anywhere else in the world. Therefore, Puri Jagannath Kshetra is considered as Purushottam Jagannath

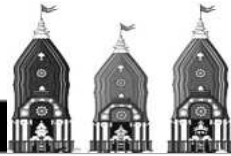
Kshetra where the gap between the God and the common people is much diminished.

Many stone inscriptions, copper plates, old palm leaf manuscripts very vividly describe the glorious ancient historical anecdotes of Purushottam Kshetra, Puri.

Shreekshetradhipati Lord Jagannath is the divine face of pluralism and inclusivity, adored and worshipped as the Lord of the Universe. Odisha state's socio-cultural, religious rituals and activities are mostly centered around the Lord of the Universe. Human treatment to Lord Jagannath generates endearment and affinity in the mind of the visitors. This is the solitary sacred place where palatable vegetarian food (Mahaprasad) is available for every visitor all the time during the temple working hours.

A poem, "Humanising aspect of Jagannath Culture" at page 63 of the widely acclaimed book, "Seeing the World" describes;

"Jagannath is apotheosis of love
and universal brotherhood
most accessible
to the ordinary people,
nourishing the whole universe.
The cult strives to establish
perpetual peace on earth
He is the Lord of the Universe.
Jagannath's mission of
Love and togetherness
greatly impacts
the global vision,
of non-violence
ensuring a rule based



international order.
Creating a world of
tolerance and compassion
leading to ensuring a nonviolent
multicultural international order”

Universal Lord Jagannath is not an incarnation, but an incarnate himself. Famous poet ‘Jayadev of 12th Century AD in “Geeta Govinda” has described Lord Jagannath to be Lord Vishnu and the Jagannath cult to be a harmonious blend of “Krishna”, “Rama” and “Buddha” cult. Jayadev’s “Geeta Govinda” has been regarded as the greatest devotional text of “Vaishnava” cult.

Popularity of Lord Jagannath and its venerable cultural tradition gradually spreads to other countries of the world due to its accessibility via its annual chariot festival celebrated worldwide. It is observed as a grand festival for the sense of fraternity. Its ecstatic involvement of the large chunk of people closing all barriers of caste, creed and religious belief has turned the festival as a people’s festival all round the world. It is a real conglomeration of multicultural, multilingual, multireligious people stepping towards unification of humankind.

I would like to quote a poem titled, “the chariot festival: evidence of oneness of mankind” from the well-known book “Seeing the World” for everyone’s consumption.

“Human instinctual drive
is a search for avenues
of togetherness,
humans are connected

at subatomic level,
and all are exposed to
the same energy
and the same consciousness.
It is a rational scientific truth,
it is, at the core of all religions.”

No doubt, Jagannath culture has global appeal. The chariot festival displays global ecstatic participation, oblivious of religion, faith, rank and file of a person. It has become a worldwide event. Now it is celebrated all over the world. The universal deity, Jagannath moves with the crowd of people, million onlookers all across the globe.

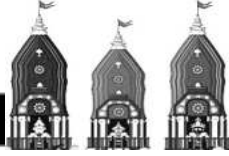
It points towards universal oneness of mankind and coexistence of all religions, through a nonviolent, loveful occasion of Chariot Festival of Lord Jagannath.

The aspiration of mankind is to experience a harmonious, loveful, war-free, peaceful coexistence, and to have nonviolent global governance, all leading to unification of humankind.

This is the sum and substance of Jagannath Culture. The grand chariot festival is observed willingly, spontaneously, by all people. Jagannath Culture is a potent facilitator in the direction of global unity. It is a forceful unifier.

Jay Jagannath.

**Kaushalyaganga, Bhubaneswar – 751002
Mob: 9861041150**



Immortality Trickles Through Him!

Er. Raghunath Patra

-1-

Lord Jagannath Culture espouses
Concept of equality, universal
brotherhood and also predominated
Odishan life in art and culture.

-2-

Boundless Culture has synthesized
all major cults of this vast country
and elevates all Indians ever
to a higher level of moral entity.

-3-

He is mysterious, limitless
beginning and end of tide
End of thoughts, imaginations
expressions, manifestations pride.

-4-

He is source of nature, deplores
Thoughts and theories all beam
and felt in every speck of dust
and immortality trickles through Him!

-5-

Both the arms spread afront
to embrace all without discrimination
face bearing with "Come-Hither" smile
with winkless eyes in equal vision.

-6-

His annual ceremonial sojourn
in Gundicha Mandir is observed

as Car festival, world famous, when
devotees from nook and corner gathered.

-7-

Adored with flower crown "Tahia"
He moves in rhythmic motion
with beats of gongs and pakhauj
with ecstatic chorus of devotees on.

-8-

Gajapati, the king Sweeps Cars
All are Servitors, He is Lord alone
Mahaprasad can be taken by all
without Caste and Creed discrimination.

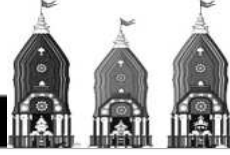
-9-

Cars pulled by all with ecstasy
Visions in Gundicha Mandir sacred
Deities are adorned in "Suna Basha"
with Costumes glittering gold.

-10-

His return to sanctum Sanctorum
ends festival, devotees delighted.
This poet is fortunate to behold all
due to His peerless grace, bold.

Brundaban Dham
Lokanath Road
Patnahat Sahi Square
Puri-752001



Sri Jagannath in Tantric Ethics

Dr. Ramakanta Kar

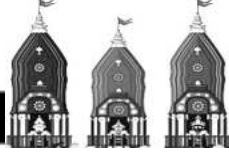
Odisha, in the ancient age, was famous as Udra Desh so it was called as Udra tantra. “Tanyate Bistaryate anena iti tantram.” Tantric ethics in India as well as Odisha were preserved in Tala Leaves. It was very appreciated by Udras, then these tantric ethics were printed in books. Sri Jagannath culture was included in tantric ethics. Now-a-days some traditions in rituals follow the part of Tantra. So trinity, Sri Jagannath, Sri Balabhadra and Maa Subhadra are tantric deities as stated by Udra Tantras. There is specialty in construction of the deities in tantric method for which trinity are showed as male & female. Trinity are Brahma, Bishnu and Maheswar and also Bhubaneswari, Dhakshinakali and Tara respectively. In Tantra Shastram it is mentioned as

“Tara sakshat Sulapani
Subhadra Bhubaneswari.
Niladrau to Jagannath
Sakshat Dakshinakalika”.

That means Balabhadra is treated as Shiva (male) and Tara (female). Like that Sri Jagannath is treated as Vishnu (male) and Dakshinakali (female) and Subhadra is

treated as Brahma (male) and Bhubaneswari (female). The tantric designed shape of trinity is very attractive in the world. So, the devotees from all the sides of the world come to Puri Srikshetra for Darshan of Lord. So, Sri Jagannath is called as Lord of the Universe. Jantra, Mantra & Tantra all were needed at a time. They see Sri Jagannath as the tantric deity. Imagination of yantra started in Tantra resulting in the combination between Purush (male) and Prakriti (female). Presence of Devi came with Deva as Laxmi-Narayan, Hara-Parvati, Radha-Krishna etc. This tradition of Tantra was preached extensively during the period of Sri Ramanujacharya as Srikshetra Nrusingha Mantra introduced in the rituals of Lord Jagannath. Sri Jagannath was famous as tantric deity. Achyutananda etc. Panchasakhas described Sri Jagannath as tantric deity. Maa Subhadra is described in Skanda Purana as Bhadrakali.

“Jai Bhadre Subhadre twam
Sarbesham Bhadradayini
Bhadra bhadra swarupa twam
Bhadrakali Namastute”. (Uttarakhanda)



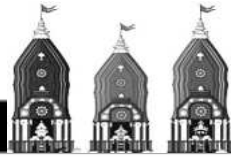
With the influence of Vaishnavas and Shaktas, Sri Jagannath became Krishnakali or Vishnukali, Sri Balabhadra became Bhadrakali and Subhadra became Bhukali or Bhubaneswari. In Tantrasara Grantha, written by Krishnananda Bhattacharya, Hrim (Balabhadra), Klim (Sri Jagannath) and Slim (Subhadra), trinity are three Vedic Vijamantras are pronounced in ritual mantra in Srimandir as “Om Klim Krishnaya Govindaya Gopijanaballavaya Namah”. Sri Jagannath became Vedic & Tantric deity. In the importance of tantric, Sri Jagannath became Madhaba and Vimala became Durga and the shapes of Durgamadhaba tatwa started in Srikshetra. The tradition of Shakti Gundicha started and Durgamadhaba jointly travelled on a Vimana from Srimandir to Narayani Temple, Dolamandap Sahi, Puri for three days. Sixty-four yoginis of tantra are there surrounding the Shreemandir. Yoginis are called in local language “Goshani”. In *Sarat puja* in the day of Ashwina Ekadasi, all yoginis sit together at Lions Gate for darshan without Kakudikhai. Because Kakudikhai is the eldest, she wakes up on Dasahara or the 10th day of this month. No.9 is very important in tantra. So SriGundicha or Car Festival is of 9 days, nine pots are used in cooking, nine planets or Nabagraha are fixed on the gate of goddess and the ratnasimhasan is situated on nine lotus flowers or Srichakra. Really the name of Sri Jagannath is not mentioned in the Vedas, but it is found in tantric scriptures. The tradition of idol worship is continuing in Srimandir in tantric method. It is also pertinent to mention that not only now, but also long years ago Indian religious concept has been dependant

on two cultures: 1. Nigam (The Vedic), 2. (Agama) (the tantric). So it is proved that Sri Jagannath is tantric deity.

Sri Jagannath is worshipped in Gopal, Bhubaneswari and Nrusinghatapini mantras. all are the clear symbol of tantric adoration. Sri Jagannath never belongs to any particular religion. He is the assimilation of all communities, philosophies and concepts. He is the deity of equality. Sri Jagannath is sthitaprajnya, yogi. Trinity are on the base of Yoga. According to tantric yogis, Sri Jagannath as IDA, Balabhadra as PINGALA, Subhadra as SUSHUMNA and Sudarshan as the BACKBONE which bears KUNDALINI SHAKTI or SERPENTINE POWER or CEREBRO. Spinal fluid is Sushumna Kanda. So, in the Car Festival of nine days, the middle Car is named as Darpadalana in which Maa Subhadra and Sudarshan travel together. Controlling the breathing by the help of IDA, PINGALA and SUSHUMNA through backbone Sudarshana is a process of Yoga & Tantra. Vedic, Yogic and Tantric devotees all pray before the Almighty for their salvation and emancipation.

Jay Jagannath.

Dr. Ramakanta Kar
Yogavidya Vachaspati
 Editor,
 Yoga Pallava,
 M: 9861238351



Lord Shree Jagannath

Hansanath Muduli

For me
You are Ram
You are Shyam
You are also Lord Shree Jagannath.

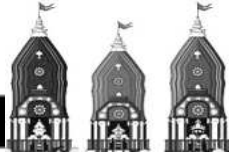
You are creator
You are creation
Also you are the beauty of the whole universe.

You are earth
You are sky
Also your unification of both the above.

You are water
You are landscape
Also you are plus and minus of both the them.

You are mind
You are life
Also you are thoughts and feelings of life.

You are visible
You are emptiness
Also you are fusion of varieties of colours.



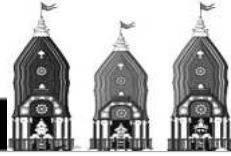
You are worship
You are flower
Also you are the great feeling
Of the fragrance.

You are hope
You are faith
Also you are the love of life in all the
ages.

You are all powerful
And you are the master of all creation.

50/1964, Dumduma (A)
Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar-751030
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Patali ShreeKshetra, The Cave Temple of Lord Jagannath

Krushna Mallik

LORD JAGANNATH is the soul of Odia race and indivisible part of Odia life. An Odia finds his identity in Him and can never imagine his entity without Jagannath. Lord Jagannath is closely associated with Odia in his day-to-day life in each and every activity like peace, pleasure, sorrows and happiness. Jagannath is the friend, father, protector, saviour for Odia. Jagannath Culture is accepted as the culture of Odisha.

As per the Madalapanji Lord Jagannath had to spend the days in difficulties for some foreign invasions in the past.

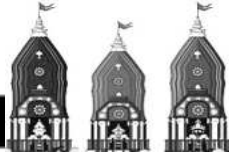
During the medieval period, the foreigners like Mughals and Afgans had become more powerful for that reason they had tried to attack time and again Jagannath temple and other shrines of Odisha to plunder the wealth.

As per the description in Madala Panji (Temple Diary), the foreigners like

Afgans, Mughals and renegades had attacked Puri temple for 18 times and Vighras were carried to different places for total 22 times from the temple by the servitors, out of which two times hid in Puri and two times outside of Puri where the deities were kept hidden in cave underground.

It is said that Rakta Bahu, the military head of foreign invaders had tried to attack on the temple from the sea, and finding no other alternative the King Shovan Dev, shifted the Vighras through Mahanadiriver water by the help of his courtiers and temple servitors to Gopali, Kota Samalai of Suvarnapur district in a vessel to protect the deities from the cruel attack of invaders.

At that time, the secret caves on the top of the hill of Gopali, Kota Samalai of Suvarnapur was used as the place of shelter for the royal family members and military groups in emergency as it was surrounded with the dense jungles and full of wild animals. That is why



the enemies had not been able to trace out the place of the shelter in the jungle to attack.

King Shovan Dev had decided that particular place to be the safer one and sent the Vighras to hide in the hill of Kota Samalai with the prior consultation of Suvarnapur king.

Initially the idols were worshipped there in an open pandal by the local people and devotees that continued for 45 years.

As the power of the Mughals and Afgans could not be suppressed by any Hindu ruler, as a result day by day they had expanded their regions. Hindu rulers could not confront the attacks of foreign enemies several times. They had conquered most of the parts of Odisha.

So, the servitors of Lord Jagannath losing all the hopes decided to shift the vighras to a safer place. Lastly, being helpless the servitors had carried the idols to a cave to hide underground located on the top of the Trikutta hill and closed the face of the cave planting a banian tree as a symbol of vighras existence.

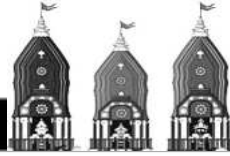
Mughals and Afgans had reigned over Odisha for a long period. The Odia kings had no opportunity to bring back the vighras to Shrimandir. Odia people had almost forgotten the hidden story of Jagannath and had lost their hopes of getting back the vighras. In the mean while 99 years had passed. The vighras had to spend the days within closed cave unworshipped.

Time rolled on. The Odia King of Keshari dynasty, Jajati Keshari had become the King. He proved himself to be the able one of those periods and conquered some of the old regions of Odisha from the foreign invaders. He gave emphasis on bringing back Lord Jagannath to Shreemandira and visited Suvarnapur to meet the local king to know the facts relating the existence of the vighras there and took all the possible measures to get back the vighras from the place of underground.

He engaged his courtiers and local people in search of the Vighras and found an old man praying under banian tree named “Dian Bara” in the jungle on the top of the Trikkuta hill. The king became very happy to know about the vighras that the banian tree planted there in the front of the cave as a mark of deities’ presence.

Getting the information from the old man about the deities, the King unearthed the closed cave and collected the vighras out of the cave underground by his courtiers and servitors.

The triad found in a discoloured disfigured manner in the cave. The King brought the idols wrapping with a new pata sarree and built new idols before taking to Shrimandir which was known as Navakalevar. From that day onwards the same tradition was repeated once in every 12 years when double month Ashadha fell in a calendar year. Using the old vighras the new idols were built by king of Suvarnapur and worshipped now there in Suvarnapur Jagannath temple.



The Triad re-entered to Shreemandir on Shraavan amabasya and wore the precious Suvarna Chittas in the forehead, given by king Jajati. From the day onwards the tradition was followed every year and the day was remembered using the same chitta in Shreemandir calling the day now as “Chitalagi Amabasya”. For this act of reinstalling the triad in Shreemandir the King Jajati was called as the second “Indradyumna”.

Though the deities shifted to Puri Shreemandir and never expected to visit Kota Samalai of Suvarnapur anymore, still the devotees are very much inquisitive to see the place of shelter of their Lord that had born the memory of that painful day which attracts them to come. So, in these days, the three Vighras, Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra ad Devi Subhadra are also worshipped in the same cave where the Vighras were for 99 years and devotees are also allowed to visit the place of underground whenever they want throughout the year. The cave is now known as Darukona Jagannath cave of Trikkuta hill.

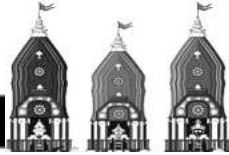
So, for that purpose, Puri ShreeMandir Committee and Odisha State Tourism Department have made some arrangements providing the possible amenities to the devotees, tourists, to visit the place easily without any difficulties. The rituals observed are Mati Handi bhoga, daily puja, puja on special occasions and Ratha Jatra like “Puri Shreekshetra”. So, this cave temple on this hill of Lord Jagannath was known as “PATALI SHREEKSHETRA”.

This is a very peaceful lonely hilly area with deep green jungles inhabited by some isolated innocent tribal community families falls between Suvarnapur and Sambalpur town having a pleasing scenic beauty with small slow flowing springs coming down to its surface with a sweet murmuring sound and sprinkling of water dusts basically in rainy season.

The place also attracts the tourists very often to its lap for enjoyment. It is 18 kilometres far from Suvarnapur and 70 kilometres far from Sambalpur by road and the Department of State Tourism had taken certain initiatives to promote the place with the help of some local bodies constructing some new stairs cases, new roads, using ropes, iron fence upto the cave of vighra’s shelter place named Darukona Jagannath cave of Trikkuta hill.

The government also allocated funds for the maintenance of the shrine and declared as the tourist place to bring it to limelight, so that the place of our Lord Jagannath exilement would be publicized among the people, devotees, tourists and attract those who prefer to visit the place, related to Lord Jagannath and Jagannath culture.

To attract the people, the local devotees celebrate Rath Jatra of Lord Jagannath with great zeal and enthusiastic in same day on Asadha shukla dweetiya like Puri and great gathering of a mela, is seen there to pull the ropes of chariots and make themselves sacred. People throng



from many parts of nearby villages for taking part in the mela with their near and dear and return with some colourful and enchanting memories to carry with. The trekking experience of lofty Trikkutta hill, the Jagannath cave, Madhab cave, Dhvani Cave, the Rani Khola cave, the small ashram cottages of hilltop, saints, the small spring, peacocks, wild bird's, cobra, bears, elephants, boars, rabbits like wild animals are sometimes seen in the jungle that provides a joy of a zoo to spectators.

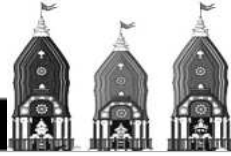
Knowing the importance of the place, Puri Gajapati Divya Singha Dev had visited the same unique place to inaugurate the newly constructed Jagannath temple of Patali Shreekshetra and the Jagannath cave along with his ShreeMandir Servitors.

Apart from this spiritual Jagannath lovers visit the place to witness the colourful landscapes and to have a divine touch with the blessings of Lord Jagannath.

Thus, the place holds historical importance and needs some more research in this direction to unfold the gamut of incidents of those hard days to add prosperity to present Odisha cultural history for its future generation.

Jay Jagannath.

**Damapur
Beraboi
Puri
PIN-752016
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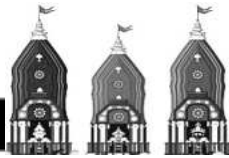
Shree Jagannath Consciousness

Pabitra Mohan Barik

There are four religious dhams in India. This dham culture is prevalent in India since ancient period. These dhams are very popular among Hindu religion and culture. Religious activities of these dhams always highlights to our great culture and civilization. These dhams include Puri in the eastern part, Dwarika in the western part, Badrinath in the northern part and Rameswara in the southern part of India. Puri which is otherwise known as the Jagannathdham. It is said to be the very ancient dham of India. Puri is one of the most sacred and religious places not only of India but also of the whole world. Puri is identified in different names like Shree Kshetra, Sankha Kshetra, Niladri Kshetra, Martya Baikunth, Nilagiri, Nilasaila, NilaKandara, Jagannath Dham, Bhuswarga and Purusottam dham etc. Puri is one of the great pilgrim cities of the world. Lord Jagannath is the symbol of love, peace, and brotherhood. So, devotees not only inside India but also from every corner of the world come to avail the scope of having a

glimpse of Puri tritha. Religious liberalism and peaceful coexistence seem to be base of the Shree Jagannath Consciousness. This Consciousness has spread all over world.

Consciousness of Shree Jagannath cult has helped spread the feeling of friendship and brotherhood among the human being. Shree Jagannath consciousness is above all the sects, colours, communities and languages. It has encouraged the world brotherhood to be united. Shree Jagannath culture and consciousness teaches to be humble in our each effort of building the society. The great essence of Jagannath consciousness is based on devotion one can feel miracle of Lord Jagannath when he completely surrenders himself to the Lord. Humanistic appeal is one of the essences of the Jagannath consciousness. In the past the king and emperor of Odisha considered themselves as representatives and servants of lord Jagannath. The unique feature of Shree Jagannath consciousness and culture

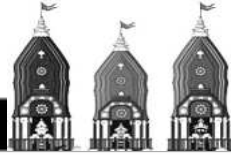


reflects in the social life of the people. Irrespective of caste, creed, and colour everybody can openly have the darshan of Lord Jagannath on the chariot during Ratha Yatra. If one sees Vamana or Lord Jagannath on the chariot during the Car Festival, one will never have to take rebirth again, being freed from all his sins.

Therefore, Rathayatra is called Patitapaban Yatra. Ratha Yatra or Chariot festival is a Hindu festival associated with Lord Jagannath held at Puri in the State of Odisha, India. Description of the Ratha Yatra and Jagannath Culture can be found in the Brahma Purana, Padma Purana, Skanda Purana, and Kapil Samhita. This annual festival is celebrated on the Ashadha Shukla Paksha Dwitiya. The festival commemorates Jagannath's annual visit to Gundicha temple Via Mausima temple near Balagandi chhaka, Puri. As per Ratha Yatra the deities of Jagannath, Balabhadra, and

Subhadra along with Sudarshan are taken out in a procession to Gundicha temple and remain there for nine days. Then the deities return to Shree Mandir. The return Journey of Puri Ratha Yatra is known as Bahuda Yatra. Ratha Yatra festival has become a common sight in most major cities of the world since 1968 through ISKCON. All over the world more than 100 cities now are successfully performing car festival with much pump and gaiety. The Indians and Hindu living in the foreign countries celebrate Rathayatra in a religious way. The socio-cultural activities of Odisha are reflected in Jagannath cult.

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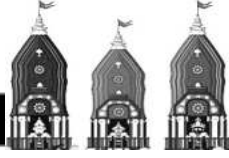
Gajapati Maharaja: The First Servitor of Lord Jagannath

Dr. Sarbeswar Sena

Lord *Jagannath* is a deity unique to Odisha, no other region worshipping a form of Vishnu like Him. *Jagannath* possesses many of the qualities of *Vishnu*, the preserver of the Universe that has been created by Lord *Brahma*. *Jagannath* is kind and compassionate to His devotees, patiently listening to their prayers. He is a generous God for that He is so beloved to His devotees. He is the Almighty and Emperor of the emperors. He is the Master and the whole world surrendered at His lotus feet. Lord *Jagannath* is the Lord of the Universe and this concept of universality is reflected in His name itself.

The word 'Jagannath' is a combination of two words i.e. *Jagat* + *Nath*. 'Jagat' means the universe, 'Nath' means the Lord. Hence, *Jagannath* is known as the Lord of the universe of three worlds - of the heaven, the earth and the nether world. *Jagannath* deity is worshipped in regional Hindu tradition in India as a part of a trait along with elder brother *Balabhadra*, sister *Subhadra* and

the weapon *Sudarshan*. He is the Supreme God, *Purusottama* and *Parambrahman*. *Jagannath* temple in *Puri*, Odisha, is the most significant in Vaishnavism and regarded as the most important among *Char Dham* pilgrimage sites in India. *Jagannath* is linked to other names, such as 'Jaga', 'Jagabandhu' (Friend of the Universe), *Kalia* (The Black coloured Lord), *Darubrahman* (the sacred wood-riddle), 'Darudebata' (The wooden God), 'Chaka Akhi' or 'Chakanayan' (with round eyes), 'Chakadola' (with round pupils) are also in vogue. *Jagannath* is considered as equivalent to the Hindu mythological concept of Brahman / *Param Brahman*, *Purusottam*, *Shunya Purusa*. He is the *avatari* (the incarnator), of other avatars. He nourishes the whole world. On the other hand, the worlds have surrendered at His feet. He is the master and all human beings are His servants. He embraces the devotees irrespective of caste, colour, sex, creed and His mercy is poured on them. The rituals in *Shree Mandir* start from the dawn to late

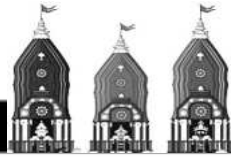


night '*Badasinghar Besha*'. The persons entrusted with *seva-puja* (ritual services) of the deities are known as the *Sevak* (servitors). Among them *Gajapati Maharaja* is regarded the *Adyasevak* (the first and foremost servitor) of Lord *Jagannath*. It is said that King *Anangabhima Dev* of the 13th century introduced 36 categories of *sevaks* known as *Chatisanijog*. The servitors and their association is *nijog*. That increased gradually and new ritual services introduced since 17th century. Now there are 119 categories of *sevaks* in *Shree Mandir*. According to Hindu mythology, in *Satya Yuga* Lord *Jagannath* manifested in *Shree Purusottam Kshetra (Puri)* in the present *Chaturddha Daru Vighraha* forms by the prayers and supreme devotion of king *Indradyumna*. The king sacrificed his all and dedicated his entire life in the devout service of Lord and laid the foundation of *Adyasevak* (First servitor) of Lord *Jagannath* and that noble practice continued by the successive kings of Odisha. The kings of Odisha, since the 15th century AD, have been popularly known by the title '*Gajapati*'.

The history of *Shree Mandir* is different to that of the mythology and legend. However, both mythology and legends provide some information to the historians. As per historical statistics, *Chodaganga Dev* of *Ganga* dynasty started the construction of *Shree Mandir* and *Anangabhima Dev-II* completed the same. He established the *Chaturddha Murti* in *Shree Mandir* in 1197 AD. The research

scholars are in doubt whether *Anangabhima Dev* renovated the old temple or constructed the new one. *Anangabhima Dev* also added a new festival i.e., *Ratha Yatra* (Car Festival), that became famous world over. From his period, the tradition continues with renewed faith and fervour. In course of time many unprecedented events occurred and socio-political and economic life of Odisha was badly affected. Equally the religious horizon became cloudy. External enemies took several attempts to plunder *Shree Mandir*. The *Gajapatis* of Odisha sacrificed their wealth, prestige, name and fame to give protection to the deities, but sometimes failed miserably. The deities were shifted and hidden in different places for seven times. All the *Gajapati* Maharajas of Odisha are the great devotees of *Shree Jagannath* and never neglected their services as *Adyasevak* of the Jews.

Gajapati is a regnal title from the region of modern Odisha in the Indian subcontinent. The word '*Gajapati*' in Odia refers to '*Gaja*' meaning elephant and '*Pati*' master or husband. So, *Gajapati* etymologically means a king with an army of elephants. The title was first used by the Eastern Ganga dynasty and that continued by succeeding dynasties with the patronization of Lord *Jagannath* as the imperial deity of the Odia cultural realm. The contemporary titular *Gajapati* belongs to the head of the *Bhoi* dynasty, as the dynasty inherited the legacy of the historical ruling chiefs of Odisha invested in the title of *Gajapati*. As a record of right, they



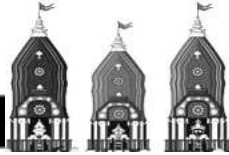
exercised administrative control of the *Jagannath* Temple at *Puri*. The *Gajapati Maharaja seva* is independent and distinct from the statutory position of *Gajapati Maharaja* as the hereditary chairman of *Shree Jagannath* temple Managing Committee under *Shree Jagannath* Temple Act, 1955. But during the British Rule in Odisha, there was an ugly attempt to abolish the tradition of ‘*Gajapati Seva*’ in *Shree Mandir* as well as the control of the temple administration.

The temple of Lord *Jagannath* is the source of inspiration and aspiration for the *Odias* in their personal and national life. *Odias* live and die for Lord *Jagannath* and sacrificed everything calling upon themselves constant struggle and distress for protection of *Jagannath* and His temple at *Puri* for centuries and so were their *Gajapati* Maharajas. Anangbhim *Dev-III* of Ganga dynasty declared Lord *Jagannath* the real emperor and the king himself was the *Pratham Rout* of the kingdom *Utkal*. *Suryavamshi* kings also declared themselves the *Pratham Sevak* (first servant) and their kingdom belonged to Him. The kings were His *sevakas* by receiving *Angyamal* from time to time. This tradition continued even after Odisha became subservient after the sad demise of *Gajapati Mukunda Dev* in the battlefield (1568).

With the death of *Mukunda Dev*, the last independent *Gajapati* King, Odisha passed into the hands of Afghan rulers of Bengal for a long time. Lawlessness

prevailed all around. From mid-16th century to 1592, Odisha was ruled by five Muslim kings successively with the downfall of Mughals, the Marathas occupied Odisha and the British took over the state from them. The British government were not in a position to tolerate the importance of the *Gajapati* king in the temple administration. The people and royal house of *Puri* continued fighting to keep the British administration away from interfering in the management of the *Jagannath* temple. The conflict reached the apex after the death of *Gajapati* king *Birakishore Dev* (1859). The temple administration passed through a crucial phase. But the widow wife of *Birakishore*, *Suryamani Pattamahadei* played a vital role in safeguarding the honour of the royal family and *Jagannath* culture.

In spite of the crooked policy of British government *Rani Suryamani* was successful to make her adopted son *Dibyasingha* the superintendent of the temple. But that became a case of unrest among the *sevatyas* and indiscipline in the entire temple administration. The fatal famine occurred in 1866 and people died in large number out of hunger and starvation. *Suryamani* distributed cooked *Mahaprasad* to the famine-stricken. The British government was pleased seeing her noble gesture. *Dibyasingha Dev* attended adulthood (1875) and *Suryamani* handed over the duties as superintendent of the temple to him. But *Divyasingha Dev* somehow or other was indifferent to temple administration and insensitive towards the *sevakas* and priests. Meanwhile an

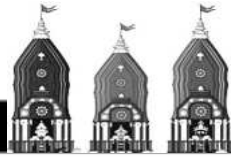


unfortunate incident occurred. On false allegation of killing a monk called Sadhu Das he was banished to Andaman Islands (1878) and His successor *Mukunda Dev* was a minor. So *Rani* took the charge of the temple administration. Due to mismanagement, the Rathayatra of 1879 could not be conducted smoothly. The British government interfered in the temple administration and passed the *Puri* temple Act of 1880. As per the Act, the duty of Superintendent of the temple was vested in a committee of Management and the king of *Puri* would remain as a nominal head on hereditary basis. This act of injustice hurt the sentiment of the people of Odisha and accepted it as an attack on the *Gajapati* king and Hindu religion as a whole. *Rani Suryamani* took the matter to the Hon'ble court of law and the renowned pleader the great Madhusudan Das strongly pleaded in favour of the minor king. Sir Stewart Bayley, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal wanted a compromise. He sent for Madhusudan Das, the law agent of the *Rani* and Metcalfe, Commissioner of Odisha. A compromise deed was signed. Accordingly the *Rani* would have the sole authority of the services of a government office to manage the temple affairs till *Mukunda Dev* becomes adult. *Suryamani* appointed *Harekrushna Das*, *Shirastadar* of the judge's court of Cuttack as Manager of the temple. The compromise was a historic victory of the *Rani* in particular and the Hindu community in general. Needless to mention that, the sole credit goes to Madhusudan who was a Christian by religion but a secularist in mind

and spirit. He had deep honour for Lord *Jagannath*. After *Raja Mukunda Dev* became an adult, *Rani Suryamani* vested superintendence in him. The tradition of *Gajapati Seva* and superintendent of temple Administration continued without any intervention till-date.

The *Gajapati* kings of Odisha surrender themselves at the feet of the Lord *Jagannath* and ruled over the kingdom as His representative or servant. Mythology and legends speak about many miraculous phenomenons relating to *Gajapati* kings and Lord *Jagannath*. '*Kanchi Abhiyan*' is the most important among these. The story glorified the divine blessings, poured on *Purusottam Dev* and he had the victory over *Kanchi*. It also established the intensive devotion of *Purusottam Dev* and the divine grace of Lord *Jagannath* bestowed on him.

The legend '*Kanchi Abhiyan*' states that *Purusottam Dev*, the prince of Kalinga fell in love with princess *Padmavati* of *Kanchi* while he was on a ride in a forest. The king of *Kanchi* got the information from his spies that, *Purusottam Dev* sweeps the chariot of Lord *Jagannath* during the Car Festival. He became furious and refused to give marry her daughter to a mere sweeper. *Purusottam Dev* took it as an insult to his Master Lord *Jagannath*, the presiding deity and dishonour to His sacred rituals. This insult was so unbearable for him that it invited a war. As a true devotee of Lord *Jagannath*, *Purusottam Dev* prayed for mercy from the Supreme Lord for victory over *Kanchi*. Lord *Jagannath* never



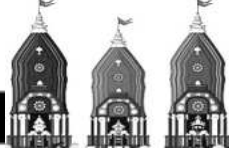
disheartened His devotees and joined the Kalinga army along with His brother Balaram. They rode on their favourite horses, Balaram on the back of a black horse and *Jagannath* on the white one. On their way they were thirsty and drank butter milk from a milk-maid, *Manika* and provided her a gold ring with the assurance that the king coming behind would pay the price seeing the ring. The king arrived; *Manika* showed the ring and asked for money. The king burst into tears and praised *Manika* for being able to see Lord *Jagannath* in a mortal form, for he recognised that the ring belonged to Lord *Jagannath*. The king presented her a lot of wealth along with a village, named as *Manikapatna* and that still exists in modern Odisha. *Purusottam Dev* won the battle with divine intervention, brought *Padmavati* and ordered his minister for marriage of *Padmavati* with a mere sweeper. The intelligent minister waited for the golden opportunity and gave *Padmavati* in the hands of *Purusottam Dev* while he was performing the ritual '*Chhera Pahanra*' on the chariot of Lord *Jagannath* during the *Ratha Yatra*.

It is said that, there were bets on this battle with each other, whoever wins the battle will take another country's deity. Accordingly the winning king *Purusottam Dev* brought the *Uchista Ganesh* and installed on the western side of *Jagannath* temple. The painting enlivens depicting Kanchi Abhijan on the walls inside the *Jagmohan* hall of *Jagannath* temple afresh the memories of the great battle fought between Kalinga and *Kanchi* and the

affection of Lord *Jagannath* towards His '*Adya Sevaka*' *Gajapati Maharaja*.

The noble tradition of '*Gajapati Seva*' of the *Shree Mandir* is a sacred one and *Gajapati King* is the *Adya Sevak* of Lord *Jagannath*. He is highly regarded by crores of *Odias* and accepted him as '*Chalanti Vishnu*' (Moving Vishnu). The *seva* is referred to '*Gajapati Maharaja Seva*'. It is also popular as '*Raja-niti*' (Royal ritual). *Shree Gajapati Maharaja* is hereditarily entitled to perform '*Rajaniti*'. It includes '*Chhera-Pahanra*' (sweeping the floor around the throne of the deities by a gold handled broom) during *Rath Yatra*, *Snana Yatra*, *Chandan Yatra* and *Dola Yatra*. In the absence of *Gajapati Maharaja*, these *sevas* are performed by his *sevak*-representative, *Mudiratha* who also performs '*Raja-niti*' on behalf of *Gajapati Maharaja*. The *Gajapati Maharaja* performs ritualistic services during the festive occasions such as *Champak Dwadasi*, *Sharadiya Durga Puja*, *Rajprasad bije* and also during *Nabakalebara*. He is also entitled to perform *Raja-niti* in the *Garbha-griha* (sanctum – sanctorum) in the ceremony known as '*Gahana-bije*'. During this *seva* *Shree Gajapati Maharaja* accompanied by *Mudiratha* and the royal entourage are allowed entry to the inner compound of the temple. *Gajapati Maharaja seva* is distinct and independent and is ratified by the Temple Act (1955).

Shree Jagannath culture bears a great impact on the socio-religious and



economic life of Odia people as well as the Hindu community. Lord *Jagannath* is being accepted as the Lord of the Universe and extols equality, liberty and fraternity both in body, mind and soul. *Gajapati* king is honoured as the first servitor of his Master, *Shree Jagannath*. The conception of *Jagannath* culture is unimaginable without

the *Gajapati Maharaja* and his *seva* as the first servitor of the Lord.

At/PO- Purusottampur
Dist.- Kendrapara-754223
Mob.- 9437088039

Life Car

Dr. Rajalaxmi Jena

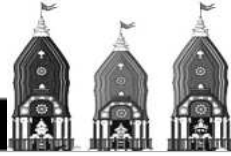
Thinking so and so
Stepping step to step
Restlessness spreads
With my breath,
Awaiting anxiety
Everlast everywhere.
Pressure persuades
Me politely,
Come and know Maya
Mayadhar is calling.
Asking my goodness,
How beautiful is
This and that
Here and there, the world.
Can you enjoy it ?

Oh! God,
Chanting Mantra Means
Calling unseen
Come and See
Everything is OK
False is broken down
With murmur sound.

Truth is Omnipresent
Come From
Within me,
To see the sole
Walk of life car.



Asst. Teacher
Jhunjhunwala Bidyapitha, Baranga.



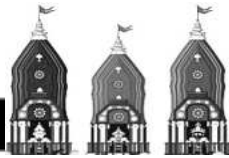
Let's Act For A Child Friendly Car Festival

Subhanarayan Satapathy

All we know that, we are very sincere towards our lovely, cute, blessed children of our family. Our *Upanishad* says *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* that means the world is a family. If the world is a family, we all related and the children are future of the world. Hence, the children should be protected and cared always. Lakhs of devotees, visitors present in Puri to obtain blessing of Supreme Lord Jagannath, Badathakur Balabhadra and Maa Subhadra. The child visitors, runaway children, missing children, children of conflict interest are more vulnerable in the crowd and mass gathering of pilgrims. The past instance depicts abandonment of *dibyang* children by their parents and guardians with a faith that Lord Jagannath will take care of their children as we became unable to take care of the children having approximately hundred percent multiple disable. Apart from that, some children runaway from their home due to some domestic reason like; corporal punishment, mental pressure etc and come to Puri during Car festival with

anger or depression or anxiety mood without setting any goal. They are unaware about their rights, protection etc. The runaway children become more vulnerable when receive negative guidance from strangers. Hence, whatever the strangers guide, the children carry out. The children might not leave their home, If the children know about their protection and very sincere to their right. We cannot say that the children are sole responsible for the cause. Because the child has been nurtured with the parental guidance and whatever the parents, guardians, environment guide the child learn and work out. Hence, responsibility of every parent is to care his or her children imparting life skill, discipline.

The people of every corner of world come to join the holy car festival at Puri. These people belong to children to old age. The children behave and take step according to the parent's behavior & action as practiced earlier. Because they follow it and adopt it. Meanwhile some people come to Puri during car festival for surrendering

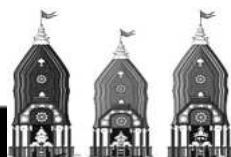


themselves before Lord Jagannath with divine darsan to acquire salvation. Some people come for business purpose and some come to provide service to devotees. These people come with positive attitude. Some people come with negative mindset with self-interest. They want to take advantages of crowd for pick-pocketing, theft, teasing, cheating etc. Though police administration have always been alert for 24 hours still there are fear of child trafficking, child labour, stealing mobile, money etc for which the recognized volunteers, child protection officials, child helpline staff, Police have been deployed for rescue and rehabilitation of children need of care and protection. Earlier a mock drill also conducted. The Quasi Judicial Body Child Welfare

Committee has also been functioning with creating some special provision like; 24*7 working schedule, online production in rush conditions, monitoring of volunteers etc for the best interest of the children.

In case of the children need of care and protection as per the law i.e. children with strangers etc must be produced before the Child Welfare Committee. As a result, the Committee will place the child in an institution for immediate shelter, food, psychosocial counseling etc and keep along with professionally cared and protected environment. Simultaneously, the responsible competent staffs take immediate necessary step for searching the identity of the child. So local people,

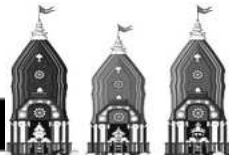




pilgrims should be aware of such kind of children to connect them to the system if found anywhere. The people should not take selfie with the child and not publish the photographs in the social media for searching of near and dear of the child. Again, law prohibits any kind of illegal handing over of children to unauthorized persons. The activities are violating the principles of law. Last year the same situation came to the notice of the Committee and DCPU. After interference, protection of the child ensured. In such condition, any person can inform through toll free telephone number of Child Help Line 1098 or integrated toll free contact no 112 or police control room for rescue and support to the children need of care and protection. As the CWC working for all time, the person can contact directly to the Committee for immediate placement and support. In this respect, steps are taken for contact information display in centrally located places, information centers, hoarding for public view. Police person are well known about the child protection system. So we can take help of policeman. This is the rights of the children and it is our responsibility to carry out. A child should not be maltreated, tortured, humiliated, neglected at any cost. In such a situation, only sharing of information about the distress condition of the child to the people working for the children can bloom smile on the face the child. We may call it *patita uddhar*. This work done by any person is Godly. As per the data by Child Welfare Committee, above 500 children

rescued in June, July and August 2023 and produced before CWC for their placement and rehabilitation. However more than 330 children were rescued in the month of June 2023. Therefore, increase in the figure of vulnerable children during the period of Chariot Festival is not only a challenge but also threat for the holy land. Though Odisha State Child Protection Society, Odisha State Commission for Protection of Rights of Children, UNICEF extending their support, contribution and cooperation, still effort and partnership of every individual in this regard is inevitable.

Some children come with the nomadic, Banjara group of people where the people utilizing the children in the field of begging, labour etc. This practice hinders the motto of child friendly Car Festival. So these people must be aware of the Juvenile Justice System and follow the instructions, principles of Child protection. During the period of Car Festival, some people engage children in hazardous work sector like; Bamboo Queen Dance (Baunsa Rani), Circus and collect money from audience, public. It is one of the income source of these people. However, law does not permit the unlawful work. If we see this practice anywhere then we should inform to the mechanism to take appropriate step. Similarly, police keep watch on nuisance, illegal activities including the children involved in stealing gold chain, mobiles, gadgets and other materials from the visitors. But the local people or victimized person should not beat the juveniles for



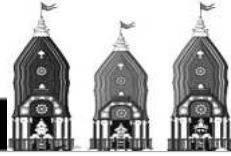
involvement in conflict of law activities rather the child should be handed over to the police and police will initiate the legal formalities as per the rule. In addition, any person should not take charge of the abandoned children as well. The law prohibits it and it would be considered illegal adoption or detention. The information must be shared by anyone with the personnel working for child protection.

Thus, there is a need of public cooperation to make the Car festival child friendly. Immediate sharing of information regarding a vulnerable child would help to make the future of the child bright. If people come forward to perform such

responsibility sincerely for the interest of children then the car festival can be child friendly. Such issues with the festival may seen anywhere at any time. Hence, we can feel proud and obtain blessings of Lord Jagannath if we extend unwavering support for protection of rights of the Godlike children.

Bijipur, Brahmagiri, Puri

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Purushottama Sri Jagannatha: The Ultimate Almighty God

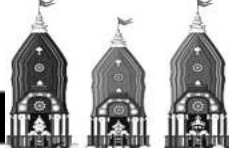
Dr. Biraj Krushna Mishra

The legendary and most popular Lord *Jagannatha* indeed is unique in many respects and also various names. I want to mention here only one as *Purushottama* of them in view of my limited penetration and with a little bit of knowledge to the concerned topic which is vast.

The prime symbol of Odia identity is Lord *Jagannatha*. He is the spiritual and material chief of Odisha who is rightly called as '*Baa Thakura*' (the great God of Gods). He is called as so many names, such as: *Parambrahma* (Supreme soul) means all of the souls (Individuals) are tide with him. He is '*Nirakar*', '*Mahabahu*', '*Patitapaban*' and '*Purusottama*' etc. So, he is called '*Purusottama*' means best of all men and he, himself known as '*Purusottama*' emanates a message to the world community to be good men. He being the master of the Universe and also being the '*Purusottama*' his dharma is '*Visva Dharma*' (Universal Religion), which ought to be followed by all the people of the world. Here, *Sri 'Purusottama'* is a symbol

of idealism and others try to achieve that idealism in their lives. A man can also be called a God if he acquires all the heavenly qualities or the idealisms of the God.

To identify Lord *Jagannatha* as the sum total of ten incarnations means an acceptance of the theory of socialism, i.e., 'all are equal before the eyes of the God', and he has not made discrimination and distinction between man and man; He is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. Lord *Jagannatha* is the supreme sovereign of the Odia nationality. We should feel He is one and only the best person, who is head of our Odia family. So *Sunyasamhita* of *Acyutananda Das* have described *Sri Jagannatha* as the prime cause or source of all incarnations means '*Avatari*' not '*Avatara*'. That's why, we can say *Sri Jagannatha* is the '*Avatari Paramapurusa*'. So out of ten incarnations the most evolutionary incarnation and the highest manifestation is *Purusottama Sri Jagannatha*, named as '*Parambrahma*'- the supreme entity. There are some historic



evidence, epigraphic references, copper plate findings which have proved that – ‘The three unfinished deities representing *Jagannatha*, *Balabhadra* and *Subhadra* were installed by *Brahma* and have been worshipped traditionally since then as the greatest holy trinity in the little town of *Puri*, known as ‘*Srikshetra*’, ‘*Sankhakshetra*’, or ‘*Purusottama Dhama*’ (the best of the cities), which is one of the four *Dhamas* in the Hindu philosophy.

The origin and antiquity of *Purusottama* – *Jagannatha* and *Purusottama kshetra*– *Puri* remains unsolved. Evidences suggest that from very ancient time *Purusottama-Jagannatha* was being worshipped at *Purusottama Dhama*. The word *Purusottama* formed by the combination of two words such as *Purusa* and *Uttama*, this means the best of all men and also, we may define ‘*Purusesu uttama*’- *Purusottamah*. There is a reference to *Purusasukta* of *Sukla Yajurveda*, i.e.,

sahasrasirsapurusahsahasraksahasrapat,
sabhumisarvatahsprtvatyatisthaddasangulam.

(P.S/1)

The perfect being has thousands of heads, thousands of eyes and thousands of feet. Having pervaded the whole earth, he remains ten fingers in surplus. Again in ‘*Purusasukta*’, it is defined that,

yajnenayajnamayajantadevastanidharmaniprathamanyasan,
te ha nakammahimanahsacanta yatra
purvesadhyahsantidevah.

(P.S/16)

With the sacrifice gods worshipped the *Puruca*. These were the first ordinances.

Those mighty ones attained the heaven where the ancient Sadhus and Gods are dwelling.

So, in Vedas we do not find any mention of the word *Purusottama*. This is used with reference to *Virama-Purusa*. The *Purusasukta* also speaks of two forms of *Purusa*, one higher and the other lower. The universe emerges out of the different parts of the body of this lower form of *Purusa* is Lord of the mortality and immortality.

The word *Purucottama* has been used in *Srimad Bhagavadgita*. *Bhagavadgita* says that there are two types of *Purusa*, the perishable one and imperishable one. So, it is found in ch.15 of *Bhagavat Gita*, The Yoga of Supreme Person that

uttamahpurusastvanyahparamatmetyudahrtah/
yolokatraymentavisyavibhartavyayaisvarah//

(15/17)

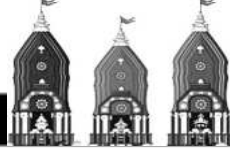
Yet the Supreme Person is other than these, who having encompassed all the three worlds, upholds and maintains all, and has been spoken of as the imperishable Lord and the Supreme Spirit.

Again, in this chapter *Bhagvan Srikrishna* said to Arjuna that,

yomamevamasammudhojanatipurussottamah/
sasarvavidbhajatimamsarvabhavenabharatah//

(15/19)

O Arjuna! The wise man who thus realizes me as the Supreme person- knowing all, he constantly worships me (The all-pervading Lord) with his whole being.



It is thus clear that in the *Upanisads*, *Purusa* is a philosophical term which is used besides in the usual sense of man or person.

The term *Purusottama* generally stands for *Visnu* in literature. So, in Sanskrit literature, the word *Purucottama* or *Jagannatha* is not exclusively used to denote *Jagannatha* of Puri.

The *Kshetramahatmya*'s of *Jagannatha-Puri* have been discussed in *Brahma Purana* written in about 1030 A.D, describes- *Purusottama* as one, whose principal attribute is that he is conceivable only in terms of contradictory qualities of Dharmas.

Matsya Purana, one of the earlier among the eighteen *Puranas*, refers to *Purusottama* as the name of both a sacred place and the deity there in.¹

Padma Purana identifies *Purusottama* with *Ramachandra* of the *Ramayana* and *Mahalakshmi* with *Sita*.²

In the *Visnu Purana*, *Krisna* is addressed both as *Purusottama* and *Jagannatha*.³

In the *Vamana Purana* (7th century) *Visnu* is prayed by *Aditi* as *Jagannatha*.

In the *Sasthamuttara Khanda* of *Padma Purana* *Purusottama* is taken for a sacred month, although in its *KriyaYogasara Khanda*, it is merely another name for *Jagannatha*.

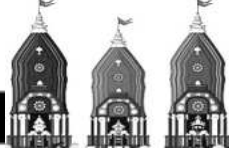
In the times of *Garuda Purana*, *Purusottama* had already become well-

known. *Purusottama* in this *Purana*, becomes synonymous with such other names as *Gobinda*, *Kesava*, *Damodara*, *Visnu*, *Tribikrama*, *Narayana*, *Hari* and *Vasudeva*.⁴

In *Agni Purana*, *Purusottama* has been described in terms of the attributes of *Salagrama*, which in turn is the same as *Vasudeva*, *Sankarsana*, *Pradyumna*, *Aniruddha*, *Krisna*, *Visnu*, *Nrusimha*, *Vamana*, *Tribikrama* etc.

The *Purusottamamahatmya* has identified *Purusottama* with *Visnu*, *Krisna* and *Jagannatha*. In it *Purusottama* is depicted as one who sees all in the Universe and as *Paramesvara*, who sports the creation, preservation and destruction of the Universe. He is none but *Narayana*, *Visnu* or *Jagannatha*, is the granter of the four *Vargas*, i.e., piety, prosperity, pleasure and salvation. He pervades the whole Universe and, at the time of deluge, he contains the entire Universe in him. Again, in *Purusottamamahatmya* *Jagannatha* has been described as a Vedic deity. The *Ramayana* uses the term *Maryada Purusottama* for one who, like *Rama* is always ready to attend to the call of duty.⁵

In the *Mahabharata*, *Jagannatha* is mentioned in connection with the thousand names of *Visnu*.⁶ In Sanskrit literature, the word *Purusottama* or *Jagannatha* is not exclusively used to denote *Jagannatha* of *Puri*. *Kalidasa* refers to *Purusottama* as a name for *Visnu* in the "*Raghuvamsa*". *Murari Mishra* in his "*Anargha Raghava*" mentions *Purusottama*.



Krushna Mishra in his “*Prabodha Candrodaya*” makes a reference to the temple of *Purucottama* in the *Utkal Desa*.

Thus, the term *Purucottama* generally stands for *Visnu* in literature.

Above all those references we can say in Hindu belief in Satya Yuga God took the form Lord of *Nrusimha* the lion headed, in *treta* incarnated as *Sri Rama*, in *Dvapara* born as *Srikrisna*, but in Kali revealed himself as *Darubrahma Sri Jagannatha* or *Purusottama*. The supreme Lord is not the totality of the phenomenal selves. He transcends all of them, although. He is the sustainer of all of them. So, *Brahma PuraGa* describes *Purucottama* as one, whose principal characteristic is that He is conceivable only in the terms of contradictory qualities of Dharmas. The conception of *Purusottama* Lord Jagannatha or *Darubrahma* which leads to brotherly-hood, heavenly bliss and spiritual unitary system and final salvation, as a result of which the entire human race will be success in each and every sphere of life, unless and until we ourselves completely surrender towards him with love and devotion in very simple clear heart. All are equal in the eyes of *Purusottama Sri Jagannatha* by whom we are all binding each other brotherly-tie, and ultimately the entire world war be free from violence and there will only exist the non-violence which leads the eternal peace. So our first and foremost duty is that, we should keep faith on him and bestow our love, devotion and everything to the beloved Lord

Purusottama Sri Jagannatha named as supreme entity and that he is our ultimate desire and destination.

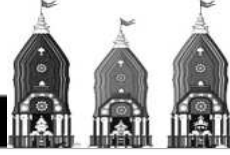
End Notes:

- 1 *Matsya Purana*, XII,13-sl.35 and XIII, sl.35.
- 2 *Padma Purana*, ch.22, sl.57.
- 3 *Visnu Purana*, V.33.41.
- 4 *Garuda Purana*,1/131/10-16.
- 5 *Purusottama Mahatmya*, 3/31,3/37,5/21,5/29.
- 6 *Mahabharata*, *Anusasana Parva*, 135.12.

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Sri Purushottam Kshetra Mahatmya

Kanchi Narayan Mohanty

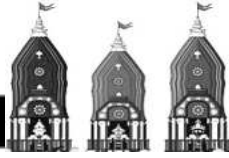
Sri Purushottama (Jagannatha) Kshetra Mahatmya is a Dialogue between Sage Jaimini and the other Sages who wish to have a detailed idea about Lord Jagannatha and His Sacred Abode Purusottama. Jaimini says that formerly the account about Lord Jagannatha was spoken by Lord Skanda after hearing from Lord Siva. He also mentions that he heard it from Lord Skanda, and he narrates what he had heard.

The narrative begins with a question by the Sages to Jaimini, as to why Lord Narayana (Visnu) who is Effulgent Light, the Supreme Being and the Master of the world, is present in the sacred place Purusottama (Puri) in Wooden Form. They also ask as to who had established that sacred place. The text seeks to answer this and incidentally describes all matters related to it. Several questions are put by the Sages from time to time which are duly answered by Jaimini.

According to the Purana, after bringing about the Creation, Lord Brahma is oppressed by its burden and wants to be rid of

it, and also to know how the creatures who are tormented by the three afflictions of worldly existence (arising out of one's own self, from the other beings, and from the natural forces), can get over them. He prays to Lord Visnu for a solution to this. Lord Visnu directs him to the place Purusottama where He is present in the Form of Nilamadhava, of sapphire. There, in front of Lord Brahma a crow comes from somewhere, has a dip in the water of Rauhina tank which is nearby to quench its thirst, rolls on the ground before Lord Nilamadhava and is liberated. It is implied thereby that whoever sees Lord Nilamadhava attains Liberation, as a reply as it were to the query of Lord Brahma, as to the means of Liberation and of lessening his burden.

Hearing this, Lord Yama, the god of Death, gets perturbed and thinks that if beings get liberated in this manner so easily, then his own authority over the mortals and the departed souls would get eroded. He comes to Purusottama and prays to Lord Nilamadhava. In reply, the Lord indicates



through Goddess Lakshmi that He cannot leave this sacred place under any circumstance at any time. Those living here are entitled to Liberation. Accordingly, Yama cannot have any authority over them, and he should seek to exercise it elsewhere.

There is an old story about the wooden image of Sri Jagannatha. After Srikrishna left his mortal body being shot at the arrow of Jara Sabar, his body was consigned to fire. While the body was reduced to ashes, the navel portion remained unburnt. It was immersed in the ocean which floated down the western sea and subsequently changed its course to reach the Puri coast of the eastern sea in the form of a piece of wood. King Indradyumna (under a divine command) retrieved this log of wood to construct the idol of Lord Vishnu.

Before constructing the idols, Viswakarma cautioned the king not to open the door before the expiry of twenty-one days during which he would be constructing the idols inside a closed room. But after twelve days, when the king and the queen didn't hear any sound of the construction work, they grew impatient, broke open the door and entered the room. They saw to their utter dismay that the maker of the idols had disappeared leaving behind the half-made idols. These idols had no feet, no ears and hands were incomplete too.

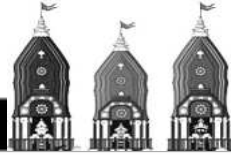
But He is all-pervading and all-knowing. The icon of Lord Jagannath has a special appeal to the devotees over ages which has made them spellbound. They still wonder at the beauty and grace of this unique

image. Although Sri Jagannatha has been conceived as the image of Lord Vishnu, the Bauddhas, the Jainas, the Saivas, the Saktas, the Ganapatyas and the Sauras have all accepted Him as their own presidig deity as Purna Brahma Parameswar.

Jagannath is a highly humanized deity. He brushes His teeth, takes bath, changes His clothes, wears different robes and gold ornaments studded with precious stones to suit different festive occasions and seasons, enjoys fifty six varieties of food (bhoga) and thirty six kinds of services khatani niyoga and retires to bed. Social functions like Deepavali, Payashraddha and Holi are held, inside the temple. In summer the Lord takes cool bath in water mixed with sandalwood paste. During Nabakalebar, He leaves His old body and assumes a new one. His old body is cremated in Koili Baikuntha. Here, the conception of god is human and majestic.

Jagannath culture does not admit any distinction with regard to caste, creed, colour and sex. Here the Brahmin Pundit Jagannath Das could become the disciple of the non-Brahmin devotee, Balaram Das: Achyutananda, a milkman could become the friend of Chaitanya. It has allowed inter-caste marriage even in the hoary past. The marriage of the Brahmin, Vidyapati and Lalita, the Saura girl, bears testimony to this fact. The descendants of this couple are called Daitas and they have got the monopoly to serve the deities during Anabasar every year.

Jagannath culture aims at the upliftment of the poor, the fallen and the



downtrodden. Its Lord Jagannath is called patitapaban, the saviour of the fallen. Leaving behind His golden throne in Badadeula, He comes to Badadanda twice a year during the Car festival and the Bathing ceremony in order to be in the midst of His devotees. This is a rare thing which is unique to this culture. In other cultures devotees go to the temple or shrine of the Lord to offer their prayers. But here, ever compassionate Lord comes out twice a year to help His devotees and to be with them. Anybody can draw the ropes of His chariot and can take mahaprasad, the food which has been offered to Him.

Humbleness is a cardinal human value in Jagannath culture. Superiority complex and class-consciousness have no place here. This culture ordains that no work is high or low. Here, the Gajapati king sweeps the chariots of the deities. No doubt, this is a symbolic act. This act signifies that in Jagannath culture there is no distinction between the powerful sovereign king and the lowest of the low. Here, Jagannath himself imparts the lesson of 'humbleness. During the Pahandi, the Lord ungrudgingly tolerates the kicks and fisticuffs, slaps and derogatory comments of His servitors. He behaves like a commoner. Pledging His golden ring, He quenches His thirst by taking curd from a milk-maid. He protests against the pride and arrogance of Brahmin priests by accepting a coconut from the hands of an untouchable, Dasia by name. He does not distinguish between the Gajapati king, His first servitor and a Daitapati or between a Brahmin servitor and an untouchable. Never does he tolerate any kind of

misbehaviour towards his servitors and devotees.

Jagannath culture always takes a positive view of life. It does not admit the pessimistic thoughts of grief, suffering and death. It recommends staunch faith in the Divine. It teaches man to strive for the perfection of his soul by the sacrifice of his self. Material-pursuits find no place in this culture. Here, a devotee does not ask for anything material. He prays for Divine love. A classic example of such prayer is that of Banamali Das :

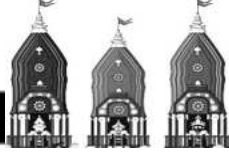
"Jagannatha ho ! Kichhi magunahin tote
Dhana magunahin jana magunahin maguchhi
Saradhabaliru hate."

Jagannath is the ocean of mercy. By His Divine benediction He can liberate us and take us out of our mortal existence to the Divine Abode. Unflinching faith in the Lord will kill all mundane desires and elevate the human soul. Jagannath culture teaches us that faith in the Lord and selfless service in the world will bring redemption to mankind.

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Oh Lord! Please Save the world!

(Translated from the Odia version : SriMandire Jai Sri Jagannathanku Magibi ki aba au)

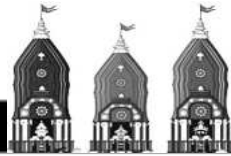
Original Lyricist : Kanchi Narayan Mohanty

Translated by : Ananya Mohanty

Oh, my Supreme Lord! As I stand before you in the majestic Srimandir
extending both my arms, I am bereft of any requests to make before you.
My life is engulfed in the pathos of misery, but Oh Supreme Lord, Please bless the world.
For this world is full of misfortunes and misery, causing pain to the mortal beings.
The endless delusion of *maya* is spreading its wings and taking your creations in its whirlwind.
Being the omniscient Lord that you are, is there anything hidden from you?
Oh, my Merciful One, please save my fellow beings from tentacles of this delusion
Take them towards their true self, hold their hands and take them towards the light.
Into the path of dharma, peace and liberation of the soul.
You are their creator and only you can liberate them from this intricate ignorance.
But if you turn a blind eye towards them, then sit at your throne alone and
watch your beautiful creation slip into oblivion,
Oh! Supreme Lord of the universe I submit the only prayer I have
Shower your kindness and save the world.

(The original Odia bhajan was composed by Lyricist Shri Kanchi Narayan Mohanty and sung by Bhajan Samrat Bhikari Bala. It was released in the year 1981 in the cassette "Baliara Bhuja" by T-Series. It had attained significant popularity among the masses then and is still one of the heart-touching bhajans of our times.)

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The Historical Geography of Odisha and Lord Jagannath

Minati Rout

Odisha's history is based on a variety of available sources, such as literary, foreign accounts, inscriptions, coins, material remains and Madala Panji.

Literature is regarded as the mirror of society.

Literary sources contain a wealth of information for reconstructing a nation's history.

The Epics:

Kalinga and Odra are first mentioned in the Mahabharat. This land, its sacred river Vaitarani and Goddess Viraja are all mentioned in the Mahabharat. The sage Lomasa advised the Pandavas in the epic to visit the river Vaitarani and take a holy bath in order to wash away their sins. On the other hand, The Ramayana refers to Kalinga Nagar, which is located west of the Gomati-river and to the Gandhamardana.

Various Puranas such as Vayu Purana, Matsya Purana, The Bhagabata, The Hrivansa

and The Vishnu Purana shed light on Kalinga and Utkala.

The Kapila Samhita and Prachi Mahatmya are regarded as sources of Odishan history.

Jaina Literature:

Kalinga and Utakal are described in Jaina literature. In ancient times, the people of Odisha were predominantly Jaina and Budhhist.

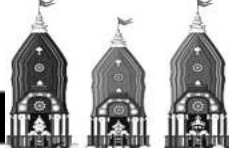
Buddhist Literature:

Kalinga and Utkal are mentioned in Buddhist Literature.

Additional significant ancient literature:

Kautilya's Arthasastra written in the 4th century B.C is standard treatise on Polity and state craft that influenced Kalinga's Political organizations.

Among other works, spiritual texts such as the Smritis of Manu, Narada,



Bruhaspati, Katyayana and Kamandaka have shaped Odisha's political systems. On the other hand, the Brihat Samhita of Varahamihira, Panini's Astadhyayi and Vatsayana's Kamasutra shed welcome light on the ancient Odisha's socio-religious and economic conditions.

The Ganga Literature is an excellent source of information about Odisha's socio-religious and economic history. The Ganga period also saw the development of Sanskrit literature and evidence by Murari's Anargharaghava Natakam, which was performed in Puri during Lord Jagannath's car festival. Sri Harsha's Naishad Charita Mahakavyam discusses the chewing of betel by the Odia people and Jagannath's procession from the temple to the platform (mancha) on Jyestha's full moon day. Vidyadhara's Alankar work "Ekavali" composed in the 13th Century, describing the Ganga emperor Narasimha Deva's encounters with the sultan's of Delhi and Bengal. Viswanath Kaviraja, author of the renowned "Sahitya Darpana" wrote Chandrakala Nataka, which alludes to his patron Gajapati Nisanka Bhanudev or Bhanudev IV (1407-37) C.E. including military victory over the Sultan of Bengal.

The Chandrakala Natika is an outstanding work during the Ganga period. The magnificent work of Jaydev's Gita Govindam was one of the masterpieces of Vaishnava literature during the Ganga period.

Among the foreign accounts, the most valuable is that of the Chinese pilgrim

Hiuen Tsang, who visited Odisha in 638-39 AD.

Inscription:

Inscriptions have a significant impact on the shaping of Odisha's history. From Inscriptions we learn about territorial boundaries, land grants and the socio-economic conditions of the people of Odisha.

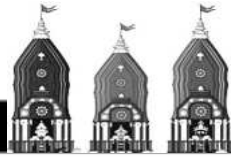
Deputy ideology was established by Anangabhimha Dev II in the year 1230. Anangabhimha's son and successor was Narasimha I (1238-1264 A.D) under whom Ganga empire reached its Zenith. Narasimha I was one of the few Hindu Rajas of his time who took up an offensive strategy against the Muslims. In a series of fights, he extended his empire even beyond the banks of the Ganga.

Narasimha on the one side followed the "Deputy" ideology of his father Anangabhimha Dev. King Narasimha claimed to act not only as Purusottama's divine deputy but also his military general.

Lord of Elephant:

Narasimha was called a great devotee of Siva and the son of Durga and son of Purusottam. Narasimha thus seems to have come back to the original idea of Anangabhimha's "Political" triad which had combined the three most powerful deities of Odisha, i.e Lingaraj-Siva, Viraja-Durga and Purusottam.

According to epigraphical evidence, Narasimha was the first king of Odisha, who



bore the title “Lord of the Elephants” (Gajapati), a title which became the most popular royal title in Odisha under the later Gangas and especially under the Suryavamsis. This title indicates the sovereign status of the king of East-India. Under the rule of imperial Suryavamsis kings, specifically under Kapilendra and Purusottam in the second half of the 15th century, the title Gajapati became a synonym of the most powerful Hindu sovereign of Eastern –India. Narasimha’s concept of kingship is best known from a series of sculptures from the world famous temple of the Sun God ‘Surya’ at Konark, which he constructed in about 1250 AD. Most important for our study of the Jagannath cult are those sculptures which depict king Narasimha worshipping a triad consisting of a Shivalinga. Purusottam and Durga- Mahishamardini. Altogether, four of these sculptures still exist, i.e. one in Situ of the temple, one in the museum at Konark and one in the national museum at Delhi and one in the Bhoga mandap of the Jagannatha temple at Puri.

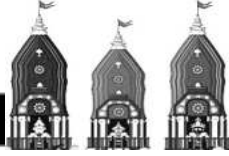
The future Gajapati kings accepted the God Purusottam Jagannatha being the ruler of the kingdom and the Gajapati themselves being God’s deputies. Among those kings who accepted the Deputy-ideology, Bhanudev II, (1306-1328) was most devoted to it. In an inscription at Puri, he called himself as the Deputy of Lord Jagannath. It is very important that for the first in the Bhanudev’s inscriptions the God of Puri is called Jagannatha.

In 1435, after the rule of the weak Ganga king Bhanudev IV, Kapilendradev, the

grandson of a small ruler (Nayaka) usurped the Gajapati throne (1435-1467) and founded the powerful Suryavamsi Dynasty under which the Odishan Empire reached its zenith. By series of successful military campaigns, Kapilendra expanded the Odishan Empire. In the year 1464, he had taken possession of the entire coast of Eastern-India and its hinterland from the Ganges to the Kaveri south of Madras. He had become the most powerful Hindu king of his time.

The temple chronicle of Puri relates that the Lord Jagannath had ordered the last Ganga king Bhanudev IV in a dream to nominate Kapilendra as his successor.

In the inscriptional evidence from Odisha, Kapilendra called him-self a Sevaka of Lord Jagannatha. Most probably this is the origin of one of the official titles of the later Gajapatis of Khurdha and Puri, who till to-day are called the “ First Servants” (sevaka) of Lord Jagannath “Deputy ideology “ of the Odishan kingship matured under Kapilendra to its full blossom which remained unchanged till the downfall of the Odishan empire in the year 1568 A.D. In evaluating Kapilendradev, it can be stated that he was a great military genius. The credit goes to him of becoming the founder of Suryavamsi rule in Odisha. He bore high-sounding titles by putting an end to the Ganga rule. He bore the title ‘Gajapati’. After conquering a part of Bengal, he justified his title “Gaudesvar”. His conquest of a part of the Bahamai kingdom and his expedition to Bidar led him to assume the title



“Kalavargesvara” After conquering a part of the Vijaya Nagar empire; he entitled himself as “Navakoti Karnata”. Thus the pompous title of Kapilendradev was “Gajapati – Gaudesvara Navakoti Karnata Kalavargesvara.

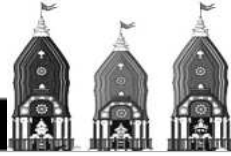
Purusa to Purusottama:

Bhagavad Gita says that, there are two types of Purusa, the perishable one (i.e. body) and the imperishable (i.e. individual soul). The Lord is beyond both of these categories of Purusa, known as Purusottama the highest Atman. The fascination of the very meaning of this word “The Lord of the Uni-

verse”. Lord Jagannath has always remained a mystery to mankind’s knowledge. The cult of Jagannath is known as “Gana Dharma” which means religion of the masses. The spirit of universal love has attracted even Muslim- devotees such as Salabega, whose songs in praise of Lord Jagannath are popular among all Odias and devotees World-wide.

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Ritualistic Adornments of Puri Deities

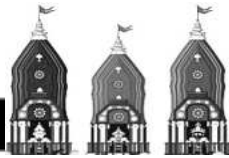
Er. Divine Das

Costume-loving Lord Jagannath along with His brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra is decorated with various ritualistic adornments known as Beshas on various occasions in the Puri Temple. The adornment of the deities is really the beauty of the temple rituals, which attract devotees from far and wide, who throng the temple daily or on festive occasions to witness such beauty. The holy rituals, including the Beshas performed by the temple servitors with perfection and purity, speaks volumes about the aesthetic sense of the Jagannath cult and the Puri Triad as well.

The Indian Pantheon has many strange deities but none so strange as Lord Jagannath of Puri in the eastern India. An amazing array of rituals and fetes are observed to worship the deities; rituals and fetes which require painting, craftsmanship, artistic use of clothes, floral ornamentation, dancing and singing and histrionics (enacting scenes of mythological and religious significance), and even culinary skills! This

makes the God's abode, the spiraling 214 feet high Jagannath temple of Puri, the most important cultural centre of India.

Among the manifold activities of cultural significance, the ritualistic adornments of the deity, known as Beshas occupy a central place. Not a solitary God but a Triad is being worshipped on the Puri temple pedestal, the Triad consisting of Lord Jagannath, the Principal Deity, and his two companion deities, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra. The names of these idols make it clear that the deities belong to a single-family as described in the great Hindu mythology, the Mahabharata (in the magnum opus of Sanskrit origin, Lord Balabhadra is presented as the elder brother of Lord Srikrishna and Devi Subhadra as his younger sister). Viewed in a mythological perspective, Lord Jagannath is none other than Srikrishna, the cowherd boy who undertook a myriad miraculous feats. But Lord Jagannath of the Puri shrine is also regarded as Lord Buddha, Lord Vishnu and variously by various religious sects.

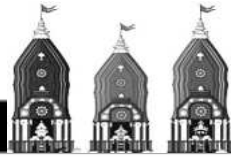


The shape of Lord Jagannath's idol, and that of his two companions, also is puzzling. Though Lord Jagannath does not have any feet, the God is more than six feet tall ! He appears even taller since the idol is mounted on a stone seat known as Ratna Singhasan. And Lord Balabhadra is an inch or two less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

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

The adornments, whether every-day or special Beshas, are not only interesting but of cultural significance as well. Though Besha literally means make-up, the Beshas of Puri temple are multi-media art. The three idols, of course, are made of wood;

but many other objects are also artistically used for the adornment, which display creativity and enhance appeal. These other objects and materials may be enlisted as floral ornaments, clothes, gold and gem-studded ornaments, cane-works, solapith (Sponge-like shoots of a watery plants, which are used for artistic crafts), Zari (golden coloured foil) works, applique foil works and various wooden statuettes which serve thematic and decorative purposes. Of course, all these are not used in every Besha: the materials are selected as per the theme as well as tradition. In fact, tradition plays a pivotal role in the Puri temple activities, and the activities of this shrine are not only innumerable but also amazingly varied. A vast regiment of temple Sevayats (those who have been serving the Lord according to tradition) are engaged in these ritualistic activities. From chariot-building to grave digging (yes, there is a time when even the deities die and there is a burial place for them!). For colouring the idols, there is a class of people known as Pushpalakas who are the most important persons in decorating the deities. The other temple craftsmen and artists whose services are indispensable for the adornment include the sculptors (rupakara), the painters (chitrakara), the goldsmiths (bania), the tailors (daraji) the foil and solapith craftsmen (rangata silpi) etc. But they all work as per the direction of the Pushpalaka whose name literally means "one who decorates with flowers". Flowers, really, play an important role in several Beshas. Just as there are so many special Beshas, which are undertaken on



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

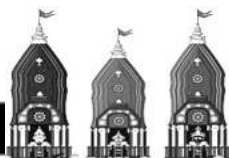
The reasons offered for this unique aesthetic tradition in the Jagannath cult are many. According to one scholar, Lord Jagannath is also regarded as Vishnu, the Creator Supreme, who loves ornaments and takes many forms. But Jagannath and his companion deities appear crude with the eyes and nose and mouth of the icons lacking finesse. Lord Jagannath's idol like that of Lord Balabhadra's, doesn't have ears or feet and the hands are half-made. This creates enormous possibilities for Besha or make-up, he maintains. The real reason for this practice of adornments perhaps is to counter the aboriginal effect of the sculptures by the sophisticated Hindu ornamentation known as Besha in the Puri temple tradition. A hallmark of the Jagannath culture, it may be pointed out, is this blending, this union of the tribal and non-tribal, the

aboriginal and Brahminical. Viewed in this perspective the practice of Besha appears symbolic. The many Beshas of Lord Jagannath also reveal his many-faceted personality.

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

Strange is Lord Jagannath and so is His mundane practice followed by many rituals intrinsically blended with humanism performed by the servitors as per the temple traditions.

AGM, OPTCL
Nuasahi, Nayabazaar, Cuttack



Ayurved in Jagannath Cult

Prof. (Dr.) Dibyajyoti Moharana

The Ayurveda means science of life, which impliedly stands for change in Nature. It is believed that Nature is the walking-ground of God. We worship Lord Jagannath as Darubramha. He is the Darudeity. The literal meaning of Daru is tree and this tree is the structure of life. The biosphere largely exists on the plant resources. The Ayurveda is an ancient scripture based on plants, in which there are certain guidelines and advices for maintenance of happy and healthy life. The Ayurveda advises us how to lead healthy and peaceful life.

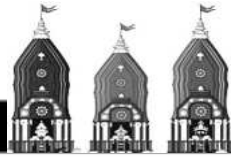
Lord Jagannath is Himself an eternal source for Ayurved. Since the idol of Lord Jagannath is made of the wood of Neem tree, it has got

Ayurvedic importance. On the other hand, Neem is a very good medicinal plant, descriptions about which are vividly found in Ayurvedic scriptures. The rituals of Puri Triad amply speaks of Ayurvedic tradition. In Jagannath culture we can find use of Ayurved in many ways than one. During

some ritual worship the deities are medicated through the ancient mode of Ayurved.

Puri, one of the ancient pilgrimages of India, is considered sacred for human beings because of piety attached with it for presence of Lord Jagannath. The place Puri is also considered eco-friendly due to its healthy climate and good stretch of coastline. The sea here is very attractive and serene which charms the pilgrims both internally and externally. The sea is the symbol of life for the whole world. The atmosphere spreading over Puri is wholesome considering the healthy climate prevailing over it. The habitations which exist here since long is only possible and significant only for Lord Jagannath, which is really otherwise known as Jagannath-Puri.

Since the climate in Puri is wholesome on many counts, people from various parts of the country and abroad visit the place everyday with a purpose of getting happiness, peace and joy. Pilgrims or tourists irrespective of caste, creed and colour



through here on many occasions hopping for healthy living in this sacred city. The moment they reach Puri, they get eternal bliss, thanks to Lord Jagannath.

From religious point of view Puri is a famous place for Hindus, who come here to get salvation from life-cycle. The pilgrims, be they Hindus or of other faiths, feel joy in their body and mind after having a glimpse of Lord Jagannath and this great temple atop which the red or yellow flag named as Nilachakra (Blue wheel) undulates in the air. The offerings of Lord Jagannath known as “Mahaprasad” are very tasty and they enrich the body and mind of the devotees who relish them anxiously. An example can be cited here to this effect.

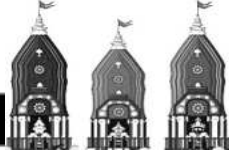
Late Bidhan Chandra Ray, a former Chief Minister of West Bengal, was a physician. Although he was adept in modern medical technology, he did not ignore the popular ayurvedic practice and was gifted with a good insight. One day a patient suffering from stomach disease came to him for treatment. The patient had already tried all means of treatment to cure himself but in vain. When he reached Dr. Ray for treatment, the latter advised the former to go over to Puri and stay there for three months only to take Mahaprasad to his heart's content so, that he could be cured of disease. Accordingly the patient did as advised by Dr. Ray and was cured of the disease.

This is not the only instance. There are many such instances that people suffering from incurable disease have been com-

pletely cured due to blessings of Lord Jagannath upon them. Another instance is given here. One patient suffering from paralysis was brought carried to Lord Jagannath at Puri. When he was made stand near Garuda Stambha (Existence Pillar) at the temple, he became spell-bound to see the ever-smiling face of the deity. At once he shouted loudly “Jay Jagannath” and since then he began to utter words freely and was cured of paralysis. It is not a fictitious story. A few years ago this miracle happened which made headlines of the newspapers then.

As mundane cares are reflected in the rituals offered to Lord Jagannath, as such he is not free from worldly affairs. Jagannath culture almost reflects the century old traditions of the Odia society. The deity lives like a human being, performs the activities and even dies and this wooden body is burnt with sevayats performing his last rites. This is what one finds in the performance of Nabakalebar (New body). Lord Jagannath also suffers from diseases like human beings and when he falls sick, He is offered herbal medicines as rituals to be cured from diseases. These herbal medicines include leaves, roots and barks of medicinal plants which form essential parts of the Ayurveda. To cure deities from worldly ailments through Ayurvedic rituals has almost become an enigma for all time to come.

Lord Jagannath is a god, but human activities are reflected in Him. His shape known as heavenly being is also reflected in the humans who most emotionally and

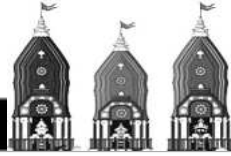


devotionally get attached with him. Although He is the Creator of the whole Universe, yet He performs human activities through servitors. During summer days even He is not spared from the scorching heat. He is brought to the pedestal meant for bathing and gets bathed there by the servitors and the whole gamut of this ritual is known as bathing ceremony or Snana Purnima which is witnessed by lakhs of devotees every year drawn from inside and outside the country. In order to get a respite from heat the Puri deities take ceremonial baths and after bathing they suffer from cold fever and are given rest for 15 days preceding the famous Ratha Yatra and this rest is known as 'Anabasara', during which period the deities take Ayurvedic medicines prepared from herbal roots, barks and leaves to be cured of the fever.

The water meant for bathing of the deities is mixed with camphor, amla,

scented flowers and sandal essence. Thus, the aromatic water is used for bathing for the deities. The servitors pour the scented water, which has cooling effect, over the bodies of the deities so that they would feel cooled. Since the deities live like a human being and perform human activities, which a human being does from morning till late hours of night, by nature, they fall sick and need rest like human beings. In the temple the human activities are performed which are known as rituals and get done by the servitors. This is the typicality of our Jagannath cult, which is hardly found in any other temple in the world.

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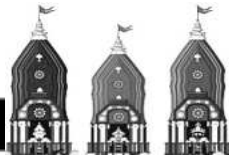


Jaina Images of Puri District with Special Reference to The Image Found in The Jagannatha Temple

Dr. Prafulla Kumar Mohanty

Jainism originated in India. But it is too difficult to fix the exact date when there was the emergence of Jainism. Due to patronage given to it by some rulers, it could become a distinct religion in the ancient and early medieval India. Now in India, there are also some followers of Jainism. Once upon a time, ancient Kalinga was the centre of Jaina activities. It has been pointed out in the Uttaradhyayana Sutra, Karakandu, the king of Kalinga was a follower of Jainism. After leaving the throne, he accepted the faith of the Jinas¹. Again it is said that after leaving Tamralipta, Parsvanatha reached Kopakata or Kopakataka. This place Kopakataka has been identified with Kupari in Balasore district². Mahavira also visited Tosali³. Kharavela was a follower of Jainism. In course of time, Jaina images were noticed in different parts of Odisha. A clear picture has come out in the depiction marked in the Khandagiri and Udayagiri caves. During the time of Kharavela only certain Jaina symbols like Kevala tree, “Srivasta Svastika, Nandipada,

Vaddhamangala, and Vrksacaitya” were worshipped⁴. But the Lalatendukesari cave inscription of Uddyotakesari refers to the installation of twenty four Tirthankaras on the Kumaraparvata⁵. As Uddyotakesari’s reign has been assigned to 11th century A.D., the images definitely belonged to that period. As present, a number of Jaina images are seen in Keonjhar, Koraput districts and in Khandagiri and Udayagiri. There were three main centres of Jaina activities namely Khandagiri and Udayagiri in Khurda district, Podasingidi in Keonjhar district and B. Singpur in Koraput district⁶. Some Jaina sculptures are now found in the present Puri district. Among the sculptures, the image seen in the Gramesvara temple at Lataharan, the image seen in Jhadesvari temple in Puri town and the image found in Jagannatha temple, Puri are noteworthy. The aim of this paper is to make a minute study of these images and to analyse how the Jaina image came to the Jagannatha temple and whether there was any link of Jainism with the Jagannatha cult.



R. P. Mohapatra refers to the images found in the undivided Puri district. In his list, some of the images seen in one part of the Prachi valley of the side of the present Puri district are noticed. At present, most of the images are not marked in those places. He points out the places like Kakatpur, Lataharan, Sri Ramachandrapur, Visvamisra Matha and Puri where the Jain images are seen⁷. A prominent Jain sculpture is noticed in the Gramesvara Siva temple, Lataharan near Kakatpur. This



Fig – 1 – Jain Image at Lataharan

sculpture has been examined by a number of scholars⁸. Here Ambika image is seen along with the Yaksha Gomeda. Ambika is considered as the Sasanadevi of the twenty second Tirthankara Neminatha. As per the description of the Rupamandana, an iconographic text, She possesses four hands each holding a bunch of mangoes, a serpent noose, a goad and a child. Its vehicle is lion and the colour of the image is yellow⁹. But here, there is slight deviation from the iconographic text. Here, the right hands of both Ambika and Yaksha Gomeda consist of a bunch of mangoes which spread over their hands. In the left hand of the Ambika, a baby is found. On the top middle of the images, a child is seen in a swing. On the top of the slab, a seated Neminatha figure is marked with chauri bearers on both the sides. On the bottom of the slab, seven devotees are marked⁹. In Odisha, many Ambika images are seen with Yaksha Gomeda. Hansanath Sahoo points out that the images belong to Jain pantheon, but he identifies them with Kushumand and Kushmandi¹⁰. At Kachela in Koraput district, an image almost similar to that of Lataharan is seen.

In the Jhadesvari temple of Puri town, a distinct Jain image is marked. After entering into the temple, on the right wall, the Jain image is seen along with other images. It contains certain typical iconographic features. The upper part particularly the face portion of the image is broken. But a canopy of a snake having seven hoods is noticed over the head. This feature clearly shows that this is the image of Parsvanatha. Kayotsarga pose is marked with hands

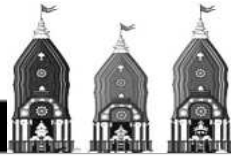
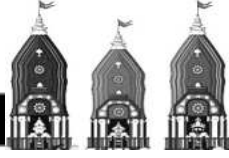


Fig – 2 – Jaina Image in the
Jhadesvari Temple

falling down. On the upper part of the image, three tied umbrella is seen. At the bottom part, one attendant on each side is found. The coils of snake are interwoven on both sides of the image. The left ear is bigger in length and the right ear is not clearly visible. Flying figures are marked on both sides of the upper part of the image. The image is found on a lotus pedestal. The size of the image is measured as 18 by 10.7 inches¹¹. Now people worship the image as a Brahmanical God, Narayana. The Parsvanatha image of Jhadesvari temple ap-

pears similar to Parsvanatha images found at Ana, Vaidakhia and Podasingidi. But these images are well preserved.

One Jaina image is noticed in the Jagannatha temple at Puri. While coming out of the Jagamohana through south entrance and after crossing the steps, one can find the image on the right wall. Now the image is protected by iron grill. The image is standing one with Kayotsarga pose. Trilinear umbrella is seen above the head. Prabhavali is marked behind the head. The face is round with long ears. Srivastha symbol is visible in the chest. The upper part contains the leaves of the Kevala tree. The image is found on Visvapadma. Chauri bearers are seen on both sides of the image. On the upper part, flying figures with garlands are seen. The upper part also contains cymbals played by hands. The hairs are arranged in the form of Jatamukuta. The bottom portion which contains the image of the lanchhana is not clearly visible as a result of which it becomes difficult to identify the image¹². However, an attempt can be made for its tentative identification. In the survey of Jaina images noticed in Odisha, it is found that Risabhanatha images seem to be very popular. Next popular images are that of the Parsvanatha images¹³. Very limited images of other Tirthankaras are marked in Odisha. Definitely this image is not Parsvanatha as serpent hoods are not marked in this figure. This image also cannot be compared with the image found in the Jhadesvari temple where there is the identification on the basis of serpent hoods. As it cannot be identified with Parsvanatha and



Mahavira images, with all presumptions, it can be taken as the image of Risabhanatha.

As to the date of Jaina images, in the Indian context, Kushana age shows three types of Tirthankara images – Jaina figure on a sculptured panel, images for worship and images in the Ayagapatas¹⁴. But most of the Jaina images reveal post Gupta features. In Odisha, the Tirthankara and Sasanadevi images can be placed between seventh and twelfth centuries A.D. but many Jaina images can be assigned to the eleventh century A.D. There was the prevalence of a developed Jaina iconography in the early medieval Odisha¹⁵.

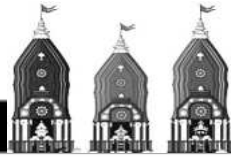
It is difficult to find out how the Jaina image came to the Jagannatha temple. Here, the relation between Jainism and the Jagannatha cult may be taken into account. This relation has been vividly described by Nilakantha Das¹⁶. He mentions, “In about the early 8th century, Indrabhuti, a king of Uddiyana, made Jagannatha represent both Jina and Buddha which he says, mean the same thing”. He refers to a stanza from the Jnanasiddhi which points out, “I bow to Jagannatha who is worshipped by all great Jinas and who also represents all Buddhas and in perfection is like the all-pervading sky”¹⁷. Again he has analysed the Jiva and Ajiva concept of Jainism and says “It must, moreover, be noted that a free soul is called by the Jainas Kevala Jiva (Jiva alone). A person having such a soul is Kevali whose state of existence is Kaivalya, a term so exclusively common in Jagannatha of Puri to mean liberation”¹⁸. He also associates the

symbol of Kalinga Jina with the philosophy of Jagannatha¹⁹. Further, the idea Mahaprasad comes from the influence of the Jaina system of Sankhudi bhoga²⁰. The term ‘Natha’ is also found at the end of the names of many Tirthankaras and it is taken as a Jaina idea²¹. Kalpabriksha is a Jaina symbol and it is also connected with the Jagannatha cult²². When so many links have been found between Jainism and the Jagannatha cult, It may be presumed that the Jaina image came to the Jagannatha temple by some followers of Jainism.

Thus in the present district of Puri, limited number of Jaina images are found. But the influence of Jainism over the area can not be denied.

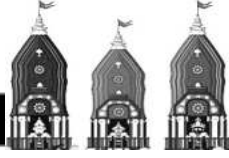
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- 4 K. S. Behera and T. Donaldson, Sculpture Masterpieces from Orissa, Style and Iconography, New Delhi, 1998, p.43.
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- 9 B. C. Bhattacharya, The Jaina Iconography, 2nd Edition, Delhi, 1974, p. xxvi.
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 - 11 U. K. Subuddhi, “A Parsvanatha image on the Jhadesvari Compound”, Research Bulletin, Vol. VI, S. C. S. College, Puri, 1988, pp. 94-96; P. K. Mohanty, “Study of a Jaina image noticed in the Jhadesvari temple, Puri”, Souvenir, Regional Session of Odisha History Congress and Seminar on Recent Trends for the Study of Ancient Odishan History and Archaeology, Puri, 2018, pp. 33-35.
 - 12 The image has been examined by the scholars, but nobody has identified it with any Tirthankara image clearly. See, U. K. Subuddhi, “A Tirthankara Image in Jagannatha Temple at Puri”, S. Pani, (ed.). Jagannath Consciousness, Cuttack, 1984, pp. 86-87; P. K. Mohanty, “The Jaina Images noticed in the Brahmanical Temples of Odisha – An Analysis of the Structure and Iconography”, R. Shrivastav, (ed.), Proceedings of the National Seminar on Archaeology of Chhattisgarh & Latest Excavation at Pachrahi, Raipur, 2010, p. 33; H. C. Das, Jaina Art in Odisha, Delhi, 2016, pp. 232-233.
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 - 18 Ibid., p. 5; Nilakantha Das, “Hints on the Significance and History of Jagannatha”, The Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol. VII, pt.I, 1958, p.2.
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The Legend of Bhaktasiromani Karamabai

Dr. P.C. Pattanayak

Lord Jagannath is an incarnation of Lord Krishna, believed universally. There are many episodes on this aspect in the scriptures. I had access to the present episode. It has its root from seventieth century and goes as under.

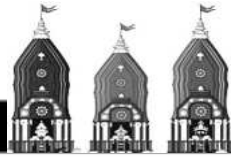
There was a merchant named Padaraj Sahoo in Madhya Pradesh. He was a very rich man, earning from his family business of edible oil. The wife of Padaraj was a passionate devotee of Lord Krishna. Padaraj used a substantial amount of his earning in welfare projects like digging a pond and constructing roads to inaccessible areas.

The king of that kingdom came to know about the welfare activities of Padaraj and became envious of his popularity. He decided to bring Padaraj to base and planned an unachievable project. He ordered Padaraj to dig a pond for the bath of royal elephants. When this was done, the king ordered him to fill the pond with oil so as to facilitate the royal elephants for the oil bath. It was a plan next to impossible to achieve. Yet

Padaraj tried to collect oil from all sources of his knowledge but was not possible to fill. As such he anticipated wrath of the king next day. At this moment his wife came to his rescue. She prayed Lord Krishna to save from this situation. To the astonishment of everybody, even the royal family, the pond was found full of oil the next morning. The family of Padaraj with his wife and daughter, Karamabai shifted to Puri in order to save themselves from the further wrath of the royal family.

Karamabai used to visit the temple of Lord Jagannath with her mother. By and by Karamabai became a passionate devotee of Jagannath in course of her visits to the temple.

Time passed on. Karamabai reached her age of puberty and became a beauty unparallel. As such it was not difficult for her parents to find a suitable groom for their daughter. They gave their daughter in marriage to a young man named Dhanu. Dhanu was a strong and stought young man with



virtue of good nature. As such the conjugal life of couple was peaceful and their happiness knew no bound when Karamabai was found to be pregnant.

The days were pleasurable for the couple, Karamabai and Dhanu. One day Dhanu went to a nearby town on his business affairs. Dhanu used to return home before the fall of night. But this particular day he was late to return. The anxiety of Karamabai grew with the passing of every minute. She was restless. At this moment a cart arrived at the door with the dead body of Dhanu. It was informed by the cartman that Dhanu was attacked by a bull causing his death instantly. With this news Karamabai decided to end her life then and there. But at this moment she heard a whisper from nowhere which told her that she had no right to end the life of the one in her womb. The next moment she came to senses taking to be the verdict of Lord Jagannath. Wiping out the tears Karamabai decided otherwise.

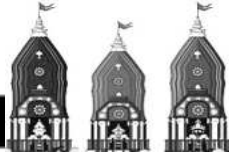
Time waits for none. It was time for the delivery of Karamabai. She delivered a nice male baby. Her in-laws were very happy to see the baby, a healthy and lovely one as it was. The boy was named Raghu. The time passed on somehow happily for Karamabai to see baby grew day after day like a moon in moonlit fortnight under the care of Karamabai. Time passed on. It was time for her son, Raghu's marriage. In the meantime Karamabai lost in-laws, one after another leaving her to manage the entire affairs of her home. But she did not have to face any

financial problems. As such Karamabai managed herself well with her son Raghu.

Days passed on. Karamabai looked after her son Raghu with all possible comfort. Raghu reached his youth and time came for his marriage. Karamabai found a suitable bride for Raghu, named Laxmi. The marriage of Raghu was solemnised with Laxmi in due course of time. The home became a 'sweet home' again for Karamabai with her son and daughter in-law, a pleasing lady. The time became sweeter again for the family when Laxmi was found to be pregnant. One day Raghu, while working at a roof top fell down and succumbed to the injury. It was unbearable for Karamabai to sustain the grief. She prayed Lord Jagannath to show path forward. Karamabai tried to console herself looking at the daughter in-law's face who was pregnant. She prayed Lord Jagannath to help Laxmi to carry on and consoled Laxmi.

Time rolled on. Laxmi delivered a male baby. Karamabai had to take care of the baby as Laxmi lost her health and finally succumbed to her illness. This was another blow for Karamabai. But she tried to sustain it looking to the face of the newly born baby, her grandson. The boy was named Vishnu. Vishnu grew under the love and care of his grandmother, Karamabai who tried to forget all mishaps and tragedies of her life looking at the face of Vishnu. But that also did not last long.

One day Vishnu, along with his friends went to the sea for a bath. To his



misfortune he faced the undercurrent of the sea and swayed away into the deep sea and succumbed. This was final blow in the life of Karamabai and she was broken down completely and cried day in and day out. She was known as a good soul and a devotee of Lord Jagannath in her area. As such her neighbours came to sympathise and to console her. Some of them suggested her to make her house a lodging for the devotees coming from faraway places for darshan of Lord Jagannath. That would be a service to the Lord and the devotees as well. Karamabai accepted such a proposal of her neighbours and made her house a lodge for the devotees coming from far and near. She served them for their comfortable stay. Thus she tried to forget all his tragedies of past. This happened one day. A devotee from a faraway place came to stay in her lodge. During the stay in her lodge the devotee somehow observed some tragedies in her past. During his stay in the lodge the devotee got an opportune moment to ask Karamabai about her past. Karamabai could not check her emotions and burst. The next moment she described the past incidences of her life. The devotee heard her attentively the tragic incidences of her past. Then the devotee took out a carved idol of Bal Gopal (Child Krishna) and offered to Karamabai advising her to take care of the idol. Again the devotee advised Karamabai to be kind to all.

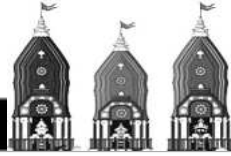
Karamabai worshipped the idol of Bal Gopal with utmost devotion regularly without fail. But this happened one day. The day she was little late to attend to the morning rituals of Bal Gopal. The servitor of the

temple attending to Lord Jagannath for the morning service heard a voice “I am hungry, Inform Karamabai”. The servitor immediately ran to the door of Karamabai and knocked at the door. Karamabai opened the door and surprised to see the temple servitor. By the time a lot of people followed the servitor being surprised to see him at the door of Karamabai. The servitor informed Karamabai what he heard in the temple. With guilty feeling Karamabai rushed to attend the worship of Bal Gopal with offerings of buttermilk and rice. The people gathered there were surprised to see that buttermilk and rice were vanished from the plate with a whisk. The people were surprised to see this event and the place was resounded with the shouts of “Jay Jagannath Jay Jagannath”. Since then she was known in Puri as Bhaktasiromani Karamabai. This episode shows that Lord Jagannath is an incarnation of Lord Krishna.

In honour of Karamabai the biggest earthen pot of Anna in the temple of Lord Jagannath is called as Baihandi. I had an access to information that the chariot of Lord Jagannath during car festival, stands for a minute in front of the Samadhi of Karamabai ! Again for the information of the readers, Karamabai had a wishful Samadhi !

My last words: When a child is born, it cries while others laugh. But when he dies others cry while he laughs.

678- Laxmisagar,
Bhubaneswar-6



Philosophy of Jagannath Cult

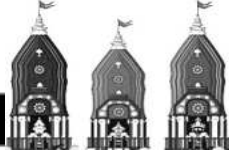
Dr. Dinabandhu Moharana

Puri, which is otherwise known as Nilachala Dham or Jagannath Dham, is famous for Lord Jagannath and this sacred place has attracted devotees and pilgrims from different parts of world down the ages. Known as the abode of Lord Jagannath it has occupied a prominent place in the socio-religious and cultural history of India. Although Lord Jagannath, the presiding Deity of Puri – the ancient deity of Hindu pantheon – faced several onslaughts from the non-Hindus or the renegade Hindus could not be subjugated by those unscrupulous elements. Rather the glory of the deities could reach the magical heights under which spell the attackers had finally to surrender to the all-pervasive strength of the deities. The history of the Puri Triad is replete with such great stories and examples.

The presiding deity of Nilachal Dham, Lord Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe is the most revered and ancient deity of Hindu pantheon who has mesmerised and bewildered crores of

devotees, scores of scholars, research analysts, poets and saints down the years. While three Dhams in different centres of India represent 3 different sects viz - Badrika-Vishnu, Dwarika- Krishna, Rameswar-Shiva, the fourth Dham i.e. Nilachal Dham symbolises as the holy place of one and all. Lord Jagannath, the presiding deity of Neelachal Dham is not a deity of any particular sect. He is cosmopolitan and embraces spiritual thoughts of all sects signifying the symbol of unity in diversity. Four words in 'Jagannath' represent four deities. 'Ja' is Jagannath, 'Ga' is Balabhadra, 'Na' is Subhadra and 'Tha' Sudarsan, So Jagannath means the union of all deities which is all pervasive and often described as 'Purusottama.'

Some scholars put forth the view that Lord Jagannath and Buddha are the same God. The great Vaishnavite poet Jayadev accepts Buddha as one Avatar of Vishnu in his Dasavatara sloka, as mentioned in his 'Geeta Govinda.'



The three images of Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra are the identical representations of Buddha, Sangha and Dhamma respectively of Buddhist Triad. Indrabhuti, the king of Uddiyan in 8th century AD wrote in his famous 'Gyanasiddhi.'

“Paranipaty Jagannatham, Sarvajina Varan Chitam Sarva Buddhamayam Siddhi Vyapino Gaganopamam.”

Lord Jagannath who is the same as the Buddha and who is all pervading Siddhi is compared to the sky. He is worshipped by all the highest Jinas. He is the giver of all, the omniscient.

Famous historian Kedarnath Mahapatra suggests that Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath have taken their inception from Triratna of Jainism :(1) Samyak Jnana (2) Samyak Charitra (3) Samyak Drusti. Bhakta Salabega, who is a Muslim, is also known as one of the greatest worshippers of Lord Jagannath. Down the years his soul-stirring Bhajans have influenced the cultural and social ethos of Odia people and would continue to sway the emotions and sentiments of generations to come.

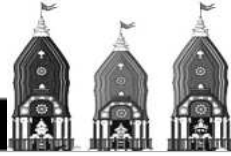
Sankaracharya, Ramanuja, Kabir, Sri Chaitanya and Guru Nanak have also visited Nilachal Dham and were greatly influenced by the philosophy of Jagannath cult which later moulded and shaped their teaching and preaching to a great extent. Dasia Bauri, an untouchable, Hadi Das, a blacksmith, Jagannath Das, the famous poet of Bhakti movement and Bandhu Mohanty an ardent

devotee of the Lord and many others were gifted with the divine blessings of the God. There is a popular belief and saying that the chariot of Lord Jagannath did not move despite all-out effort by lakhs of devotees as Balaram Das could not make it to the pulling of chariots.

In Jagannath Temple Jagannath is worshipped as Purusottama or Vishnu, Balabhadra as Shiva and Devi Subhadra as Adya Shakti. Some scholars identify Lord Jagannath as Krishna, Balabhadra as Balaram and Subhadra as the sister of Krishna who married to Arjun. Everywhere Krishna is worshipped along with Radha whose divine love has been immortalised by the great poet Jayadev. But here at Puri temple his sister Subhadra beholds the centre place with the two brothers.

But the attempt to co-relate Lord Krishna with Lord Jagannath has been strongly refuted by the great poet Dibakar Das. According to him Jagannath is the Param Brahma and Avatari whereas Krishna is only one Avatara. From Jagannath crores of Avatars are created.

The various avatars (incarnations) which appear in different sects and beliefs are only partial manifestations of Lord Jagannath. It is generally believed in Hindu pantheon that visit to any sacred place or Tirthasthan may fulfill one aspect of spiritual life but it can complete the whole circle by getting Moksha or salvation if one visits only the Nilachal Dham, Puri. Lord Jagannath is the Lord of humanism.



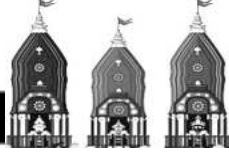
All the beliefs, faiths, rituals, customs and socio- religious traits have been assimilated in Jagannath cult. During the Rath Yatra which is being held in a year the Holy Trinity move from Jagannath temple to Gundicha Mandir in three colourful wooden chariots pulled by lakhs of ardent devotees who throng the holy town from all parts of the world. The festival does not differentiate between religion, caste, creed or sect. It symbolises the philosophy of a casteless and classless society where all members present have only one identity i.e. devotee of the Lord. The Gajapati Maharaja of Puri who is privileged to be the foremost servitor does the “Chhera Pahanra” (Cleaning the chariots with the broom having a golden handle). Nowhere we can see such a sight. It means before the Lord all are equal. The Maha Prasad of Lord is shared between one and all and is used in many sacred occasions like marriage, birthday and also death.

If one beholds the Lord Dola Govinda in the wooden palanquin during Dola festival, in boat in the Narendra pond

during Chandan Yatra (Madhu Sudan) and Lord Jagannath (Bamanam) in the chariot there will be no rebirth and he will be free from the cycle of birth and death.

Regardless of caste, colour and creed Lord Jagannath embraced the whole humanity with his strongest arms (Baliara Bhuja), although His arms practically are half constructed in His wooden image, which we generally see in the Puri temple. The Lord does not differentiate between any religion and humanity. The whole universe including humanity is His creation. The people all over world know Odias because of Lord Jagannath, Who is the symbol of world brotherhood. We are really proud of our deities of Puri.

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The Geeta Govind: A Devotional Lyrical Work

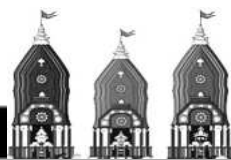
Dr. Minati Moharana

The famous devotional poet Jaydev composed the great Sanskrit lyrical work 'Geeta Govind' which is widely spread all over the world. This Sanskrit Text was written during the 12th Century AD. This great work has moulded and shaped the cultural life of Odisha. This remarkable creation has greatly influenced the literary and cultural spheres of Odisha and India as well. The great and noble composition of this famous devotee-poet has also attracted the sight of the literary critics of the Sanskrit language in the world, who are all praise for this great work and the great poet. The Geeta Govind depicts about Madhur Rasa Upasanam which means love between Lord Krishna and Radha (devotion through love).

Geeta Govind is a unique and novel creation in the history of Sanskrit literature. Through it is a small work, it has influenced the contemporary art, literature and culture of Odisha. It contains only twenty-four songs and seventy two or seventy eight verses. It has been composed in various ragas, rhymes with the use of metaphors.

More than one thousand commentaries, imitations and translations have been made so far on Geeta Govind in India and abroad. More than hundred editions of this work have been published. This proves that the famous work Geeta Govind has gained worldwide popularity.

The poet Jayadev was born and brought up in the village Kenduvilwa or Kenduli in Odisha on the bank of the Prachi river. He was contemporary to the Ganga dynasty ruler Anant Barman Choda Ganga Dev. He married to a beautiful girl namely Padmavati, an erudite daughter of Dev Sharma, who had shaped up his life in different ways. The latter half of twelfth century is known as Jayadev era or Geeta Govind era. During this period Lord Krishna and his consort Radha had absorbed the public mind all over India. They influenced the common man's cultural and religious awareness. During first half of 16th century the Vaishnavs followed Sri Chaitanya Dev who had identified Krishna with Lord Jagannath thinking themselves as Gopis who



were staunch devotees of Krishna. Jayadev sang in his eternal verses of Geeta Govind the glory of spiritual love. Lord Krishna was portrayed not as an incarnation but the incarnate himself.

The concept behind such incarnations is based on the idea of protection of the virtuous and annihilation of the wicked. Jayadev has vividly described about the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu, who is otherwise known as Lord Jagannath. Thus the cult of Jagannath has harmoniously combined the cult of Krishna, Rama and Buddha. The harmonious assimilation is depicted by Jayadev in his Geeta Govind which had a considerable influence on the religious life of the people of Odisha in the succeeding centuries.

It is said that a brinjal farmer sang the cantos of Geeta Govind while plucking brinjals in the farm in a melodious voice which enchanted Lord Jagannath so much that he followed the farmer into the farm while listening to his recitation of songs from Geeta Govind. The next morning the servitors of Puri temple observed thorns in the Lord's garments. From that day a tradition was introduced in the temple to make arrangement of recital of Jayadev's songs. The Lord was expected to be amused with Geeta Govind songs at bed time. It was learnt that Jayadev's wife Padmavati used to sing the lyrics of Geetagovind.

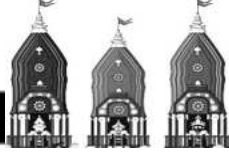
The Geeta Govind has 163 editions during the period from 1792 AD to 1971 AD. It has been rendered into many Indian

languages and foreign languages including English, French, Latin, Dutch, German and other European languages. This is how this great epic has gained popularity world wide.

The world famous poet of Geeta Govind, Jayadev was an illustrious poet. He was out and out an Odia. But irony has it that only a handful of critics have held that Jayadev was born in Bengal on the bank of river Ajay in the district of Birbhum. But a lot of literatures, critics, scholars, historians and archaeologists have proved that Jayadev was born in Odisha on the bank of the river Prachi in the undivided district of Puri in the village Kenduli or Kendubilwa.

The Geeta Govind speaks volumes about 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu or Lord Jagannath. In Geeta Govind Lord Jagannath has been described as Lord Krishna, the main character of the epic. All the cantos of this epic are concentrated on Krishna and Radha. The concept of Krishna as Jagannath is commonly found in Odisha since 12th century AD. However, according to famous historian R.D.Banerjee, not a single image of Lord Krishna was found in Bengal and Bihar by 15th century AD. From the historic point of view, it can be considered that Jayadev belonged to Odisha.

The themes of Geeta Govind have spread a religious fervor in Odisha, According to Dr. K.C. Dash, a literary critic of Odisha, Geeta Govind of Jayadev has been accepted as one of the greatest texts of Bhakti and it is the Vaishnav cult. It has considerable influence over the cultural



domain in India and has evoked great admiration in the West. The concept of Radha- Krishna worship has become a cultural heritage of Odisha and accordingly the Geeta Govind and its poet Jayadev are held in high esteem by Odia people. According to Dr. S.C. Pani, a researcher, “Even today the influence of Geeta Govind is quite powerful on the culture of Odisha. Notably, Odissi dance, now enjoying great revival derives many themes from Jayadev’s songs and the famous ‘Dasabatara’ (10 incarnations) is a part of the repertoire and sculptures even today draws inspirations from Geeta Govind. In every sense Jayadev’s Geeta Govind is a living monument of Odishan culture.” Geeta Govind is a binding force, which has formed the essence of Odia culture.

Since the famous work Geeta Govind was considered sacred, it was allowed to be sung in the Puri temple during the period of the king Narasingha Dev-II before the advent of Lord Chaitanya Dev to Puri. The Devdasi (maidservant of God) system was introduced. At the time of Badasinghar (Bedtime) the cantos of Geeta Govind were sung before the Triad in the temple with the rhythm of the song. The Devdasi, a danseuse, had to perform her bit. But Gajapati Purushottam Dev ordered to discontinue the singing of cantos of Geeta Govind as he thought it was love song. But the discontinuance of the singing could not last longer as Lord Jagannath, who was very much fond of enjoying the song, advised the main servitor of the temple in the dream to

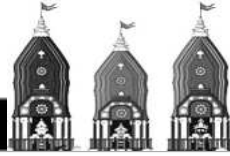
do the needful for continuance of singing of the cantos of Geeta Govind. The Lord’s will prevailed, Gajapati Purushottam Dev, who had ordered for discontinuance of the song, backtracked on his decision and again ordered for singing of Geeta Govind with an apology before Lord Jagannath.

It is said that king Purushottam Dev during his rule tried to replace Jayadev’s Geeta Govind with Abhinav Geeta Govind in king’s own name, which is said to be originally written by Kabichandra Ray Divakar Mishra. But Lord Jagannath did not approve of it and he advised the main servitor in the dream to re- introduce singing of the Geeta Govind of Jayadev as usual.

Geeta Govind is a house-hold name and so is its poet Jayadev in Odisha. The famous devotional work can never be wiped out of the memory of Odias.

The Geeta Govind has become an integral part of Jagannath cult. Down the ages it has enthralled the devotees and the Lord as well. This great Sanskrit work of superb quality has certainly withstood the test of time. Lord Jagannath is very much fond of this Sanskrit work, which has tremendous effect on the social and cultural milieu of Odisha.

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Mahaprasad: The Unifier of Caste, Creed and Humanity

Dr. Bishal Das

An integral part of rituals and traditions followed in Puri's Shree Jagannath temple, the Mahaprasad holds great significance and is simultaneously considered sacred. It is offered to Lord Jagannath, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, before it is distributed among devotees as a form of divine grace. Mahaprasad consists of 56 food items known as the *Chhappan Bhog* that is offered to Lord Jagannath in the holy Temple. *Bhog* means *prasad* or offering and *chhappan* means 56. It is believed that the Lord himself eats the food. After offering the food to the deities, it is served to the devotees. The Mahaprasad is available in Ananda Bazaar which is situated on the north east corner of the outer enclosure of the temple. It is considered the biggest open-air eatery in the world where everyday thousands of devotees purchase and eat together the divine Mahaprasad.

Legend Behind Mahaprasad:

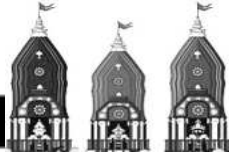
The story of the Mahaprasad dates back to ancient times and is associated with

a legend involving the temple's deities, Lord Jagannath, his elder brother Lord Balabhadra and sister Goddess Subhadra.

Legend has it that Lord Krishna, in his Jagannath form, along with his brother Balarama (Lord Balabhadra) and sister Subhadra, once visited the hermitage of a sage named Kuchela (also known as Sudama). Kuchela, a dear friend of Lord Krishna from their childhood, was living in poverty with his family. When Lord Krishna arrived at Kuchela's humble dwelling, the sage's wife was concerned about the lack of proper offerings to serve the divine guests.

To express her love and devotion, she offered them a simple and modest meal made of flattened rice (poha or avalakki). Lord Krishna, being pleased by her pure heart and love, accepted the meal with great joy and affection. In return, he blessed the couple with wealth and prosperity.

The tradition of offering Mahaprasad at the Jagannath Temple is said to have



originated from this story. Presently, the Mahaprasad is prepared in the temple's kitchen, known as *Rosaghar* using traditional methods and ingredients. It is cooked in earthen pots on a wood-fired stove.

The preparation of the Mahaprasad is considered a sacred ritual, and the food is offered with deep devotion to the deities before it is distributed to devotees. The Mahaprasad is typically served on banana leaves and consists of a variety of vegetarian dishes, such as rice, dal, vegetable curries, sweets, and cakes.

Mahaprasad in the form of Nirmalya:

One of the most famous and widely sought-after items in the Mahaprasad is the "Nirmalya," which is a form of sanctified rice that is believed to have the blessings of Lord Jagannath. This is also known as *Kaibalya*. It is considered as a great privilege by devotees to partake Nirmalya in the Mahaprasad, as it is believed to purify the soul and bestow divine blessings. In spiritual jagron, Nirmalya is equally important as Mahaprasad since there is a belief among Hindus that if *Nirmalya* is offered to a person on his death bed, he is certain to find a place for himself in the heaven after his death following atonement of all his sins. Nirmalya is commonly understood as dry-rice *i.e.* rice dried up in hot sun in Kaibalya Baikuntha.

Categorization of Mahaprasad:

The Mahaprasad served in Jagannath temple is categorized into two types. One

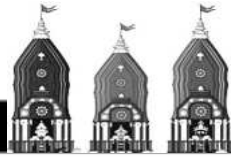
is *Sankudi* Mahaprasad and the other is *Sukhila* Mahaprasad. Both the types are available for sale in Ananda Bazaar of the Grand Temple.

Sankudi Mahaprasad includes items like rice, ghee rice, mixed rice, cumin seed and asaphoetida-ginger rice mixed with salt, and dishes like sweet dal, plain dal mixed with vegetables, mixed curries of different types, Saaga Bhaja', Khatta, porridge etc. All these are offered to the Lord in ritualistic ways. It is said that everyday 56 types of Prasad are offered to the Lord during the time of worship, and all of these are prepared in the kitchens of the temple and sold to the devotees in Ananda Bazaar by the Suaras who are the makers of the Prasad. *Shukhila* Mahaprasad consists of dry sweetmeals.

Mahaprasad and Skanda Purana:

As mentioned in the Skanda Purana items like flowers, sandal paste, garlands, etc. which are treated with reverence on the Lord and other divine deities seated on Ratnasimhasan (bejeweled throne) in the temple are also known as Nirmalya after they are taken out from the deities. It is thus established that any of the divine accompaniments or components that is taken out of the Lord and his divine associates is known as Nirmalya.

According to "Skanda Purana" Lord Jagannath redeems the devotees by permitting them to partake His Mahaprasad, to have His darshan and to worship Him by observing rituals and by offering of gifts.



Mahaprasad is treated here as ‘Anna Brahma’. The temple kitchen has got the capacity to cook for a lakh of devotees on a day.

In his book “Sri Purusottam and Sri Mandir”, Dr. Satyanarayan Rajaguru Mahapatra had mentioned that it was during the reign of Ananga Bhima Dev that many changes were initiated in the customs and rituals of the Lord particularly in the system of oblation. The prevailing system of making Mahaprasad available to the devotees on sale in the premises of the Grand Temple was introduced during his rule. He also constructed a *Bhog Mandap* in the Temple and had increased the quantity of offerings by introducing a good number of new dishes numbering 56 items.

Preparation of Mahaprasad:

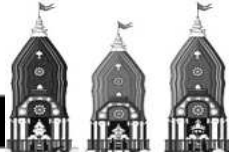
Mahaprasad is cooked in a traditional manner. In place of metal utensils, earthen pots are used to prepare the Mahaprasad and in place of cooking gas firewood is used as the fuel for cooking. The Mahaprasad is slowly cooked over burning firewood. In this process, the nutritional values of the ingredients are retained. The ingredients used in the preparation of Mahaprasad are indigenous. While no garlic or onion is used in the preparation of Mahaprasad, vegetables like potatoes or tomatoes are also not used as these are considered foreign vegetables. The ingredients used in the preparation of Mahaprasad are 50 quintals of rice, 20 quintals of lentils besides humongous quantities of vegetables like red pumpkin, yam, brinjals and more. Legend says that

these aren’t cooked by humans. It’s believed that the ingredients are put in earthen vessels and kept on fire to be stirred and cooked by the god.

The Mahaprasad is offered six times a day to the deities beginning from the very early morning to the late night. The offerings offered to the deities are called *Dhupa* which are offered by *Sodasa Upachars*, a regulation which is followed while offering the Mahaprasad. The form of Mahaprasada offered during the mid-day is known as *Naibedy* and is considered one of the famous prasada of the temple with maximum number of food items.

It is believed that the food items of the temple are not cooked by humans, mere ingredients are put in the huge earthen pots and vessels which are then kept on wooden fire. After a period of time these pots are removed from fire by the *Supakaras*, special priests of the Jagannath Temple who perform this task only. The *Supakaras* bring the Mahaprasad to the ‘Garbhagriha’ or the sanctum for offering it to the deities. There the Naibedy is first offered to the deities and thereafter it is offered to Goddess Vimala. It is believed that after the offering is made to Goddess Bimala, the prasada becomes Mahaprasad and then after deducting a portion for Pandaas and priests of the temples these are taken to the Anada Bazaar where it is sold to the devotees for a minimal cost.

As per the Sakta faith, the prasada offered to Jagannath becomes Mahaprasad



only after it is offered to Goddess Bimala. In deference for this tradition, King Jajati constructed a 38 cubic feet high temple for Sri Jagannath and at its Nairuta angle, thereafter constructed an 18 cubic feet high temple for Goddess Bimala. As per Jajati's arrangement, the offering made to Jagannath becomes Mahaprasad (the grand offering) only after it is offered to Bimala. The preparation and sale of Mahaprasad is fully controlled and managed by the Suar Mahasuar Nijog (an association of servitors) of the temple.

There is a very common belief regarding the Mahaprasad that the cooked Mahaprasad never gets finished even if it is being cooked for a limited number of devotees. This is said as the "Mahima" of Lord Jagannath that no devotee goes off the temple with empty stomach and without having the Mahaprasad.

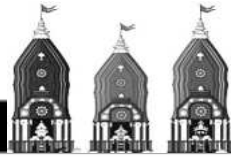
Mahaprasad and Rath Yatra:

A day prior to the annual Rath Yatra when the presiding deities offer Nabajauban Darshan to the devotees, the Mahaprasad is directly offered to them and then sold in Anand Bazaar. With the commencement of the annual Rath Yatra, the activities of the temple kitchen decreases considerably when the deities, who take their place on their respective chariots, are offered only "khechudi bhog" (a thin rice and dal preparation) which is cooked in limited quantities. When the deities arrive at the Sri Gundicha temple for their annual sojourn, the world's largest kitchen inside Puri Jagannath Temple ceases working.

Preparation of Mahaprasad thereafter shifts to Gundicha temple where cooking of Mahaprasad by Mahasuar Sevayats starts only after the deities make their ceremonial entry into the shrine and are placed on their high pedestals. The Mahaprasad offered before the deities during this period, is known as 'Adapa Abhada'. On the day, the deities embark on their return journey from Sri Gundicha temple, preparation of Mahaprasad is not done and till the deities re-enter their original abode following Niladri Bije and are placed on the Ratnasimhasan. Therefore, the Jagannath Temple kitchen lies idle for around 13 days while the devotees have to go without Mahaprasad for about a week.

Conclusion:

The pious Mahaprasad available at Shree Jagannath temple is priceless. It is freely consumed by people of all castes and creeds without any discrimination. Renowned for its unique flavour, preparation methods and spiritual significance, the Mahaprasad is an essential part of the spiritual and cultural heritage of Odisha and specifically Puri. For the devotees of Lord Jagannath, the Mahaprasad is much more than holy food. It is an elixir, a message of the Lord and a unifier of humanity. A visit to Jagannath Temple in Puri is incomplete without partaking of Mahaprasad at the sacred Ananda Bazaar. The food in the temple kitchen is prepared in such a pure way and with deep devotion, that a great spiritual impact is felt, both by those who cook and those who eat. Legend has it that



when the steam cooked food is carried to the Lord in slings of earthen pots no essence can be smelled from the food but when the same is carried back to the sale point (Anand Bazaar) after being offered to the Lord, a delicious smell spreads along in the breeze to the pleasant surprise of the devotees. Now the food is blessed. The holy Mahaprasad is served on any auspicious occasions like thread ceremony, wedding and lastly the holy Nirmalya is needed at the death bed. Mahaprasad consolidates human bond, sanctifies, sacraments and grooms the departing soul for its journey upwards. Hence Lord Jagannath is inseparable from Odias and Odisha. The Mahaprasad has retained its appeal among tens of millions of devotees for ages.

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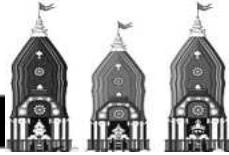
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O Jagannath!

Gurukalyan Mohapatra

O my Lord!
Lift me, hold on to me
Embrace me, embosom me
Lob me not
On the rosy bed of cozy woes.

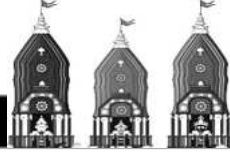
I'm at Your abode,
Stand and stare at You
From Your Lion's Gate,
I'm an ever-vigilant beggar
A desolate bystander forever.

I've renounced my home and hearth
Forsaken my near and dear ones
Awaiting Your Grace, Your benediction
My only orison:
Solace from this vale of tears.

Believe me,
I'm lost in a placid reverie
In pensive meditation,
Strange though that You are
Ever unreachable
Beyond comprehension.

O my Lord!
Be kind enough
Lift me, love me, lure me
I'm at Your Lotus feet
Beseeching Your blessings
Seeking your Involution.

Journalist
Bhubaneswar



Naba Nilachala: Sri Jagannath Temple in Mahesh, West Bengal

Laxmi Narayan Mallik

“Naham basami Baikunthe yogina hridaye na cha,
mad Bhakta yatra gayanti tatra tisthami Narada.”

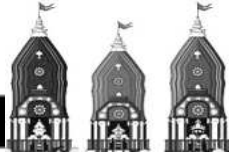
- The Padma Purana

(I don't reside in heaven (Baikuntha), I also don't stay in the heart of saints, I reside there where my devotees remember me.) as told by the Lord to Narada Muni in Padma Purana.

Sri Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe is beyond all comprehension, description, manifestation and imagination as He is Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient. But for His common devotee He is ever present as a friend, philosopher and guide. For a pure and simple heart, for an unquestionable faith and trust, He is always there. His bliss and divinity can always be felt by the one who completely surrenders at His lotus feet. He appears before His ardent follower the way he remembers Him. The Lord has left the grandeur of Nandighosh and preferred the sand chariot of Matta Balaram Das. He has accepted the coconut of Dasia Bauri by extending His hand upto Garuda stambha. He has stopped His chariot on the Grand Road

and waited for Salabega to reach Puri and have His darshan. He has appeared before Ganapati Bhatta in the garb of Ganesh and before Tulsi Das in that of Ramachandra. The Lord with elder brother Balabhadra has gone to the battlefield as common soldiers riding on horses to protect the dignity of His first servitor Gajapati Purushottam Dev. Similarly, to fulfill the wishes of Saint Dhrubananda Brahmachari, the Lord has manifested Himself in Mahesh, a small village on the banks of river Bhagirathi in Serampore of West Bengal province.

Lord Jagannath has been the principal deity for the inhabitants of Mahesh village and surrounding areas in Serampore of West Bengal since time immemorial. They have



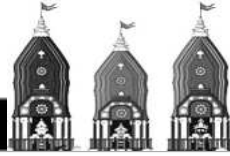
always reposed immense faith and trust in the Lord. A number of folklores and legends are still prevalent around the Lord who is there since last 650 years or so. Some people of this region still believe that before going to Puri, the main abode of Sri Jagannath, one has to go to Mahesh temple to seek His permission to travel in order to make the travel fruitful.

According to popular belief, in the 14th century, Dhruvananda Brahmachari, a saint from Bengal Province, had visited Puri for darshan of Mahaprabhu. He felt ecstatic while observing the rituals of the Lord and a strange thought came to his mind. He requested the priests (*sevayatas*) to give him an opportunity to cook the food himself for offering the same to the Lord. The priests rejected this idea telling Dhruvananda that it was a crime even to think of such an idea which was against the rules of the temple. Dejected, the sage went on a fast until death as his wish to serve the Lord remained unfulfilled. On the third night, he received a divine instruction in his dreams to return to Mahesh near Serampore and wait for the right time when Lord Himself would appear there to fulfil his wishes.

A delighted Dhruvananda returned from Puri and built a hut on the banks of the river Bhagirathi in Mahesh village and waited for the appearance of the Lord. As the news of a saint living alone inside the dense forest awaiting some divine miracle gradually spread in the area, the villagers of nearby villages gathered near his hut. After a few days, when the rains arrived, Dhruvananda

and the villagers waited with bated breath. After a night of torrential rains, with the first rays of the morning sun, a huge trunk of neem tree was seen on the bank of the river which had flown in the gush of water from upstream. Overwhelmed with joy and ecstasy, the Daru Brahma was brought to the shore by all gathered there. The idols of the Holy Trinity were constructed from the holy wooden log. A temple was built by Raja Manohar Ray of Sheoraphuli in which Saint Dhruvananda started worshipping the Lord with simple rituals and felt great satisfaction and joy as the wish of offering cooked food by him to the Lord got fulfilled. As time passed by, Mahesh's Jagannath temple and Rath Yatra festival became popular in Bengal and the Lord's glory spread far & wide. The establishment of this Mahesh temple also indicates that religious custom following Puri Jagannath temple had spread to Bengal before the arrival of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, which was in the 15th century.

After a few years, it was difficult on the part of Dhruvananda to perform the rituals of the temple due to his advanced age. However, he had a strong belief that the Lord would take care of Himself by making some arrangement in the right time. After initiation of Sanyas, Sri Chaitanya started for Nilachala Dham, Puri from Navadweep with his disciples through water way. On the way, he stopped the boat at Mahesh Ghat and reached the temple established by Dhruvananda. As soon as he had darshan of Lord Jagannath inside the temple, he lost his consciousness and went into deep Samadhi (transcendental meditation) for a

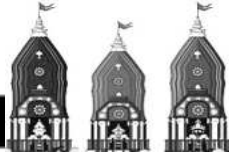


long time. Coming back to normalcy, he rechristened the place as 'Naba Nilachala' as he felt presence of the Lord there. Citing his old age, Dhruvananda requested Sri Chaitanya to take charge of the Naba Nilachala. Sri Chaitanya entrusted the responsibility to Kamalakar Piplai, one of his favourite disciples who was known as the fifth Gopala of his twelve Gopals. Even today, descendants of Kamalakar Piplai are managing the day to day affairs of the temple.

It is said that in 1794, Nawab Khan Wallis of Murshidabad was going to Kaviraj Hat in Sutanati by launch with his ailing daughter for her treatment. On the way, near the Mahesh Ghat, the sailors of the launch chanted Jay Jagannath in a loud voice while raising hands. The Nawab when enquired was informed by the sailors about the glory of the merciful God. Hearing about the divinity from them, he expressed his desire to have a glimpse of the temple and its deity. The launch was taken to the ghat and the Nawab reached in front of the temple with his daughter. Head priest Kamalakar Piplai prayed for the quick recovery of the girl, offered her Tulsi of Lord Jagannath and gave blessings. Reposing faith in the Lord, the Nawab returned to Murshidabad. His daughter recovered from her ailment after a few days. Nawab Khan Wallis donated 1185 bighas of land free of any taxation for the temple in gratitude to the Lord. The income from this land helped the smooth and uninterrupted management of the temple for many years.

With the passage of time, the west coast of Bhagirathi was eroded and it was feared that the temple might be lost in the Ganges. In 1855, Nayanchand Mallick, a resident of Pathuriaghata, Kolkata, built the present temple on the west side of the road at a safe distance from the highway. Recently, the state government has upgraded the temple by constructing a beautiful mandap in front of the temple and an attractive entrance gate with lighting arrangements. Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Radhakrishna are worshipped in the *garbha-griha* of the temple. Mahadeva, Nilamadhav, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Maa Sarada, Swami Vivekananda on one side and Maa Kali, Graharaja Shani, Hanuman and Dhruvananda Brahmachari on the other side in the courtyard of the temple are also worshipped. Garuda is sitting with folded hands on both sides of the entrance gate. Bishnupur terracotta carvings are found on the walls of the temple. Everyday, delicious cooked food prepared in firewood fuelled *chullahs* is offered to Mahaprabhu and sold to interested devotees. There is a proverb about Mahaprasad here: "*Khichudi, Anna, Payesh, Eei tinti te Mahesh*" (Khichudi, aromatic rice and kheer are the three basic elements of offerings of Mahesh). Apart from these three items, various pure vegetarian delicacies are prepared and offered to the Lord.

There is an interesting folklore about the temple called *Bala Bandhak Pala*. Once Lord Jagannath came to Mahesh from Puri to visit the temple and wished to taste



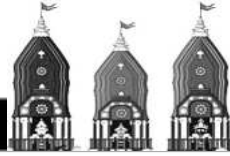
the local sweets. In the guise of a young man he entered the nearby sweet shop of Mahesh Chandra Dutta. There he consumed large number of a special sweet called Gutke Sandesh as he liked its taste. Since he had no money to pay, he gave his golden armlet towards the cost of sweets and left the place. The next day, Sevayats could not see the armlet in the hand of the idol. After a lot of searching, the main priest received the divine message about the incident and the armlet of the Lord was found in the shop of Mahesh Chandra Dutta. The shop is still there without any change to its age old design in order to keep the belief alive. Even today many devotees visiting the Mahesh temple buy the Gutke Sandesh from there and offer it to the Lord.

The biggest festival of the Mahesh Jagannath Temple is the annual Rathayatra. After the Puri Rathayatra, this yatra is the second oldest in the world and the oldest and largest in West Bengal. A huge fair is held on both sides of the two kilo-meter road for nine days from Rathayatra to Bahudayatra or Ultorath. Lakhs of people congregate here to see the Lord and pull the chariot. Eating Jillapi (spiral sweetmeat) and Papad (thin cake prepared from powdered pulses) at the Rathayatra fair is a popular custom not only in Mahesh but throughout West Bengal. Ramakrishna Paramhansa used to come here with his disciples on the occasion of Rathayatra. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay has given a detailed account of the Mahesh Rathayatra Mela in his popular novel 'Radharani'.

From 1396 to 1884, wooden ratha was used during the annual festival. In 1797, Sri Ramakrishna's famous disciple Balarama Basu's grandfather Krishnaram Basu had donated a wooden ratha. In 1884 the wooden ratha got burnt due to some unknown reasons and the practice of use of wooden ratha was stopped since then. Krishna Chandra Basu, the Dewan of the famous Basu family of Shyam Bazaar got an iron chariot constructed by the then British company Martin Burn in 1885 which is still in use. The cost of the construction was rupees twenty thousand at that time. The four storied ratha measuring 50 feet in height and 125 tonnes in weight was built in Navratna temple style having nine shikharas. It has a steel framework with wooden scaffolding. It is fitted with twelve iron wheels each measuring twelve inches in circumference and two copper horses are attached in the front.

On the day of Snan Purnima, the Holy Trinity take bath in the Snan Mandap situated by the side of the main temple. After bathing in water of the river Ganges and milk, Mahaprabhu suffers from fever which symbolises the *manaviya leela* of the Lord and stays in isolation (*ansara house*) for 15 days. At that time, angaraga (colouring of the idols with biological dyes) is done. On the day before Rathayatra, Lord Jagannath's coronation as the King is held.

It is noteworthy that in Mahesh, Naba Kalebara ritual of the Lord is not observed, which means the idols worshiped today are the original ones made by Dhruvananda in

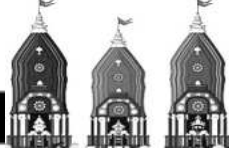


1396 from the log of Neem tree that he found on the banks of Bhagirathi river. The Trinity and Radhakrishna are worshipped in the *garbha griha* of the temple unlike Puri temple where *Saptadha Bigraha* (Sudarshan, Madhab, Sridevi and Bhudevi and the Holy Trinity) are worshipped on the *Ratna Simghasana*. Sri Chaitanya named Mahesha as Naba Nilachala, meaning New Puri. The imprint of modernity is intertwined with the traditions of the past here. Our culture has a great tradition of honouring the ancient heritage while accommodating the needs of the changed circumstances due to change of time, place and practices. Sri Jagannath temple of Mahesh and the festival and rituals observed here have witnessed about 650 years of history and associated beliefs, traditions

and folklores. Dhruvananda could obtain divine bliss through the pure simplicity and complete surrender before the Almighty. The Lord of Universe through His divine leela in Mahesh has spread the message that He can be pleased with purity of heart, simplicity of mind and complete faith and trust, devotion and dedication in Him.

Jay Jagannath.

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Guru Bashishtha Teaches Rama and His Brothers

Dr. Rama Chandra Rout

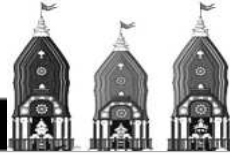
We all know that Krushna is God. (“Krushna tu Bhagavan Swayam” - Krushna Himself is God.) During the great Mahabharat war Arjun was seriously depressed after seeing all his relatives, near and dear ones, kith and kins gathered in the war field Kurukshetra to fight among themselves. He decided not to fight with his kith and kins. But Krushna was firm bound to ruin unjust and establish justice. So, He, at the beginning counselled and taught Arjun about life, soul, prayer, knowledge, goals etc including liberation. It is natural that God knows everything, so He could convince Arjuna easily and actually. He did tell Arjuna in eighteen long chapters in 700 verses almost touching everything a person will like to know.

In chapter 4 verse 38 it is told that ‘there is nothing more significant than knowledge and only by acquiring true knowledge one can know self and whole creation’. It is one of the best statement and truth ever told.

In the contrary in Yoga Vashishtha Ramayana Guru Vashishtha the doctrine teacher of Rama Chandra and His brothers teaches Him who is an incarnation of God and supposed to know everything.

There are eighteen yogas in Shreemad Bhagavat Gita starting from Vishad(despair), Sankhya(enumeration), Karma, Knowledge to moksha (liberation). But there are only six formations (Prakaranas) in Yoga Vashishtha Ramayana. These are Vairagya (Detachment), Mumukshu (Behaviour of a seeker), Utpati(creation), Sthiti (existence), Upasama (dissolution) and Nirvan (liberation) prakaran. The last Nirvan prakaran has got two sections first half (purbarddha) and second part (uttararddha).

Here Vashishtha has wisely and vividly described on the fundamental subjects of the universe in very deep but simple manner. The sections are called ‘prakaran’ which means ‘creating or done with care’ or discussions with depth and



properly. There are two texts one is bigger or Brihat Yoga Vashishtha containing about 36,000 to 42,000 verses and the shorter form is Laghu Vashishtha containing only 6000 verses.

While discussing the dispassion Vashishtha tells that time, space, universe and all functioning through pure consciousness can only be known by experience. Nothing whatever is born or dies anywhere at any time.

The whole world and the entire universe are unreal. These are born out of one's imagination and vanishes in the absence of imagination. Like clouds which suddenly appear in a clear sky and suddenly dissolve, the universe appears in the self and dissolves in it.

The marks of a liberated person (jivanmukta) are also described in detail. Guru Vashishtha tells: O Rama! There is no intellect, no nescience, no mind and no individual soul, they all are imagined. The mind has by its own activity bound itself; when it is calm it is free. He also describes about dissolutions of the mind-it is the nature of the mind to accept certain things and to reject others; this is bondage nothing else. The mind is the cause of the objects of perception. The mind is terrible in its waking state, dull in deep sleep, gentle in the dream state and dead when not in any of these three states.

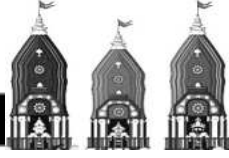
There are also discourses on the destructions of latest impressions, meditation on self, method of purification,

worship of self, exposition of self. The nirvana or total liberation is dealt at last in Nirvan prakaran in two volumes. In brief the belief in a knower and the known is called bondage. The knower is bound by the known; he is liberated when there is nothing to know. The interpretation by ignorant may be fallacious and misleading.

In a nutshell the Yoga Vashishtha is a treasure house of universal knowledge and deals with everything from creation of the universe up to liberation of self.

It is urged that every individual must at least once in one's lifetime must go through the Yoga Vashishtha so that the birth as human being can be fulfilled and liberated. It the human being who thinks, feels, ponders, knows, observes and inquires on everything he is conscious of; all knowledge come from these activities. When deeply analysed it is evident that the human being is the sole creator and thinker of all his/her imaginations and illusions. There is nothing called fate, everything results as a consequence of our doing and perceptions.

Dr. Rout, a Senior Physician is a columnist and also a retired Director of Health & FW Department, Odisha. He can be reached at dr.rcrout@gmail.com.



Sonorous Tone

Shyam Prakash Senapati

O Lord! You bestow
All smiles on some
When fill others' eyes
With tears.

Your glances are
Nothing but nectar
Your creation is
Nothing short of nectar
You sing eternal song
Of freedom
You are the icon
A path unto enlightenment.

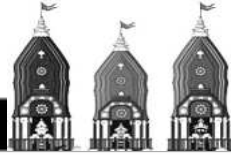
You are the liberator.
The life of all folks
You are not just the form
But formlessness.
With all this
You embellish the earth.

You pervade the stories
Legends, histories
In theories and tidings.

You are venerated
In all ages
As Lord of the devotees
Their Sole Companion
Their Friend-Philosopher
In transience
In permanence as well.

You exist in craftsman
Who carves his form
You exist in the mind
In its luscious tastes
You exist in flower's fragrance
In the music of a flute
In the melody
Of everything delicious.

Translated by Bhagaban Jayasingh
Near Kendriya Vidyalaya
Talabania, Puri-2



Turning Inside Out: ‘The Supreme Soul’ instilled within ‘The Soul of Incredible India’

Dr. Nishamani Kar

**“Varshanam Bharata Sresthah, Deshanam Utkala Srutah,
Utkalasya Samodesha Nasti Nasti Mahi Tale.”**

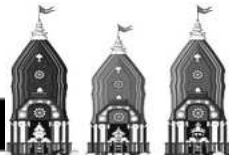
(Kapila Muni, Kapila Samhita Part II)

Kalinga or Utkala (present-day Odisha) is often considered ‘the Soul of Incredible India’. It is a unique setting with an enviable geographical marvell, pulsating natural flora and fauna, bountiful natural resources, and vibrant socio-cultural heritage. Despite being rated as ‘God’s Abode of Peace’, very little is known about this veritable landmass outside its territory - a fact that throws into sharp relief the inadequacies of Indian historiography and the political marginalisation of Odishan culture; the Odishan situation is though another subset of the pan-Indian socio-politico-religious praxis. Eventually, after all, this paper will make a modest attempt to deliberately focus on the broad features of Odishan life and letters, literature, and culture while exhaustively making succinct efforts to reflect on the Jagannath Cult. Nevertheless, a comprehensive background of history, especially cultural history, is furnished to situ-

ate the various socio-cultural endeavours while highlighting their urgency and thrust.

I

Modern Odisha, named earlier as Udra, Kalinga and Utkala, has achieved social and cultural relevance over a while. The territorial limits have been changed repeatedly for different reasons, better known and sometimes unknown. Nevertheless, it has remained a ‘salad bowl’, a colourful cultural mosaic inhabiting the Buddhists, Jains, Hindus, Muslims and Christians. In this context, the point to be noted is that the reigning deity of the land is Lord Jagannath, Who embodies in Him the chief elements of different Indian sects and cults. The cult of Jagannath has proved to be a curious mixture of heterogeneous and homogeneous features welded into one through a long synthetic process of evolution. To appreciate the ‘cultural canopy’ that is Odisha (inci-



dentally, India also offers a similar cause), we should have a thorough (re)visioning of the geographical setting, the socio-historical tenets, and ethical values, which would provide the background study on the religious and cultural currents and crosscurrents.

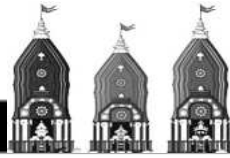
It is pertinent to note that two streams of civilisation intermingled in Odisha centuries before the Christian Era. One, from the South and the South-West, brought in by the Deccan culture of Dravidian speakers and the other was from Aryan-speaking North India, which reached in two streams – a broader or more powerful one from Magadha and the other, a thinner and weak one, from Maha-Kosala (today's Chhattisgarh) trickling down through various tracts of Bilaspur, Rajgarh and Sambalpur. The two civilisational streams gave birth to the composite and complex 'salad bowl' of Aryan-Dravidian culture in Odisha. We have the authority of Suniti Kumar Chatterji asserting such a viewpoint.

A meagre influence of Aryandom from the West and the main volume of Aryandom from the North-East -Bengal and South Bihar, and quite essential elements of culture borne into Odisha by Dravidian-speaking peoples – Telugus of ancient times – from the south: these are the main components of the historic culture of Odisha. (Chatterji 2014 15)

II

A land with a deep-rooted history dating back several centuries, Odisha is a

treasure trove of paintings, architecture, sculpture, music and dance. The ancient heritage monuments, traditional art and culture narrate the vibrant legacy of Odisha. The archaeological excavations at port sites of Odisha, such as Manikapatana and Palur, show that in the process of trade mechanism, Odisha established cultural contacts with Southeast Asian countries like Thailand, Indonesia, China, West Asia, East Africa, Sri Lanka, Maldives and also the Roman Empire and took active participation in the maritime activities of Early Historic Asia. (Patnaik 2016) The contacts between ancient Odisha, Kalinga, Sri Lanka, and Ceylon are immense and deserve special attention. It is no exaggeration to say that Odisha had thriving trade and ideological connections with Sri Lanka during the Mauryan period, if not early. From the archaeological evidence, it is clear that Odisha had a thriving trade network with Southeast Asian countries and could establish colonies in far-off Indonesia, especially Bali. Besides, there is ample evidence of exotic ceramic types in Odishan port sites like Manikapatana and Palur and sporadic evidence of Chinese and Southeast Asian pottery, as also some Roman specimens like Amphorae and Rouletted Ware found in the entire Odishan coast. Diverse, vibrant, and valuable, the art and craft of Odisha range from stonework, silver filigree, woodcraft, appliqué work, brass and bell metal work, dhokra castings, horn work to pattachitra, paper mache, terracotta, tie and dye textile in cotton, tassar and silk to name a few.

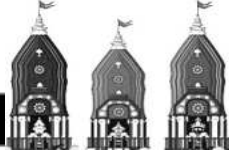


At the same time, Odisha is known for its fascinating cultural heritage, impressive temples, monuments, and spectacular architecture – a testimony to the region’s exquisite socio-cultural wealth. The early monuments date back to the third century BC. The remnant of an Ashoka Pillar turned into a Siva Lingam is enshrined in the Bhaskaresvara temple (Bhubaneswar), and the Lion Capital in the Odisha State Museum speak volumes about Odisha’s past glory. The rock-cut caves of Khandagiri and Udaygiri and the inscriptions recording Kharavela’s short but eventful reign during the first century BC constitute the second phase of the evolution in Odishan art. The Naga and Yaksha images found around Bhubaneswar belong to the post-Kharavela era. Odisha was at the height of great artistic glory during the seventh to thirteenth century AD. Described as the Jewel of Odisha for its exquisite sculptural grandeur, Mukteswar Temple is an essential landmark in Odisha’s architectural development. The 11th-century Rajarani Temple is famous for its sculpted figures (tall and slender temple figurines carved in high relief on the walls, figures in amorous dalliance and in such acts as fondling her child, looking into the mirror, taking off her anklet, caressing the bird, playing an instrument, holding branches of trees etc.) and the successive tiers of projections rising to form its 18m tower. The ‘Diamond Triangle’ comprises three Buddhist sites (Triratna) at Ratnagiri, Udaygiri and Lalitgiri. The ‘Golden Triangle’ combines three destinations in Bhubaneswar, Puri and Konark, covering majestic temples,

ancient rock-cut caves, virgin beaches, museums, art lanes, heritage villages, nature camps and zoological gardens. Built in the 13th century, the ‘Konark Sun Temple’ is one of the most stunning monuments of religious significance, a true masterpiece of architecture. The temples found models in distant countries like Bali, Java, Sumatra, Thailand, Cambodia, and Malaya. Borobudur temple of central Java and the Angkor Wat temple of Cambodia are fine examples of Odisha influencing architecture beyond the shores. Ruled by various kings and dynasties, Odisha has acquired many traditions in its wake.

III

As per historical records, in the 3rd Century BC, Ashoka promoted the cause of Buddhism after the Kalinga War, and in the 2nd Century AD, emperor Kharavela professed Jainism. Towards the end of the 5th century or early 6th century, the Gangas, staunch Saivites, ruled the region and flourished their religion. The Sirpur kings Jayaraja, Sudevaraja and Pravararaja were Vaishnavas. They ruled in the later 6th century and called themselves Parama Bhagabata, and incidentally, the elements of Vaishnavism sipped into Odishan socio-religious fabric. The Sailodbhavas of the 7th Century AD and the Karas then championed the cause of Saivism, except Tribhubana Mahadevi, a Vaishnavi. However, from the 7th to the middle of the 11th century, with the patronage from Somavamsi Kings in Kosala and Gangas in Kalinga, Saivism reigned supreme with the Sakta-Tantric Cult



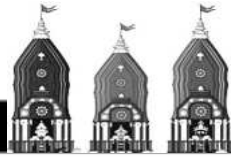
followed in its trail. In this connection, Sankara's visit to Puri cannot be lost sight of, as it imparted fresh strength to Saivism from the 9th century onwards. With the end of the Keshari Kings, Saivism gradually declined in prominence to make room for growing Vaishnavism. Ananta Varman Choda Ganga Deva, though initially a Saivite, adopted Vaishnavism towards the later part of his life. He left behind the glorious monument of his devotion to that faith in the temple of Jagannath, which was constructed during his reign and subsequently developed by his successors. In the first quarter of the 12th century, Ramanuja visited Odisha. The famous temple of Alarnath (Alwarnath) at Brahmagiri in the Puri district bears testimony to the influence of the preaching of Ramanuja, the last of the Alvars. It is also believed that the installation of the goddess Lakshmi in the Jagannath temple complex was due to the influence of Ramanuja, who, along with his followers, viewed Jagannath as Vishnu. Eventually, Vaishnavism rose to prominence from about the middle of the 11th century and is continuing in its sway to influence a larger population of the region.

In the 12th century, two celebrated Vaishnava poets – Jayadeva, the author of Gita Govinda and Nimbarka of Krishna Karnamrita popularised the Radha-Krishna lila. Jayadeva visited Lord Jagannath and recited Gita Govinda before Him. From the time of Kapilendra Deva, recitation of Gita Govinda before the Lord during the night has remained a regular practice. However, the Radha-Krishna idea, started by the saints

mentioned above, was perfected by Sri Chaitanya in the 16th century. Incidentally, the Panchasakhas, who came in its trail, created another school of Vaishnavism (known as 'Utkalia Vaishnavism', distinctly different from the Gaudiya version), which focused on Lord Jagannath. On a similar footing, Sun-god worship, expected to be initiated in the 1st Century AD, got institutionalised in Konark (the temple, otherwise known as 'Black Pagoda' – a superb architectural and artistic excellence). Also, the Ganapatyas had their centre in the Darpan estate in the district of Jajpur, and the Saktas promoted the Viraja Kshetra at Jajpur proper. From what has been stated in the paragraphs above, it is clear that the different sects of India had surcharged the socio-religious setting of Odisha in various periods of history. Finally, all merged into the melting pot of the Jagannath cult and its all-embracing domain.

IV

Jagannath, the presiding deity of Odisha, exercises unique influence over the politico-socio-religious life of Hindus. He has remained firmly grounded and internalised in the hearts of millions in India and abroad. Inevitably, the temple of Jagannath has veritably been the nerve centre of Odishan culture, primarily though during the Ganga and Surya dynastic rules, Jagannath became the state deity leading to the Jagannath Cult, an amalgamation of diverse religious faiths, a way of life, a living culture, a melting pot of all sects and religions - Brahmanya, Jaina, Buddha, Natha,



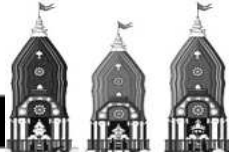
Shaibya, Shakta, Soura, Ganapatya, Nirguna, Saguna, Vaishnava - all streams have flooded and flourished in the Odisha coast since time immemorial.

For the Hindus, the origin of Lord Jagannath, around whom the religious life of Odisha has evolved from the hoary past, has been shrouded in myths and legends. Analysing the legendary association of Jagannath as Nilamadhava with a class of aborigines called Sabaras, the peculiar nature of the wooden icon of the deity and his associates, Balabhadra and Subhadra, and the association of a class of non-Brahmin priests called Daitas, presumed to be of tribal origin, with the worship of the deity, Jagannath is believed initially to be a tribal deity.

Since mythology is the 'language of the primitive', especially during the pre-Vedic age, it represents the temporal reflections on the ultimate truth. The early Vedic Mythology is the outcome of the intellectual inputs representing a dynamic process that converted a simple tribal totem into a Vedic God into an icon of a complex character by introducing various new elements. Early Vedic religion was elementary, ethereal, plain, pure, angelic, and authentic. The Griha Devata, in the initial stage, was transformed into Village Deity, venerated outside the village, leading to the God of mass worshipping inside the temple. This signifies the merger of oriental primitive tribal tradition with the mainstream Vedic faith, the 'little tradition' into 'the great tradition' of Hinduism, which exists as two bipolar extremes.

Eventually, the pre-Aryan autochthonous visionaries laid the foundation of Hindu spiritual thoughts. Even the concept of 'Soul' or the Divine ground is borrowed from the autochthonous seers and savants. The uniqueness of Lord Jagannath lies in the fact that initially, a Deity worshipped by the autochthonous Sabaras came to occupy the highest position in the Hindu Pantheon and came to be known as the Purushottama and in the process, the cult absorbed all the major religious movements and philosophy which had swept the Indian sub-continent and has evolved a unique syncretism. The legends regarding the origin of Jagannath, which have been recorded in various sources such as Mahabharat of Sarala Das, Deula Tola of Nilambar Das, Skanda Purana, Brahma Purana, Narada Purana, Padma Purana, Kapila Samhita etc. suggest the tribal as well as Brahmanical links of the deity in the initial stage. However, its distinctiveness lies in assimilating all the old religions and sects of the world, justifying the all-absorbing inclusivity of the Jagannath Cult, making it universal.

Scholars often trace the Jaina and Buddhist origin to the trinity of the Jagannath temple. The noted researcher Kedarnath Mohapatra asserts that the three images represent the Jain trinity of Samyak Jnana, Samyak Charitra, and Samyak Drusti. Similarly, the three deities in Buddhist parlance represent Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. It is believed that the tooth relic of Lord Buddha is preserved in the image of Jagannath; the Snana Yatra and Ratha Yatra are of Buddhist origin, and that all castes



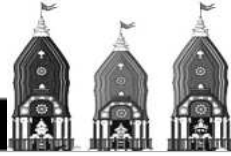
share Kaivalya on equal footing due to the Buddhist impact. Jayadeva, the twelfth-century Vaishnava poet who identified Jagannath with Krishna or Vishnu, also accepted Buddha as the ninth incarnation of Krishna or Vishnu. In his Mahabharat, Sarala Das, the fifteenth-century poet, regarded Jagannath as an embodiment of Buddha: "To deliver mankind, Jagannath has manifested himself in the form of Buddha." Daru Brahma Gita of Jagannath Dasa asserts, "To assume the form of Buddha, the Lord gave up his hands and legs." Some Odia Vaishnavas regarded Chaitanya as the partial manifestation of Buddha. In the Chaitanya Bhagavata of Iswar Das, Chaitanya is reported to have said, "I am Chaitanya in the form of Buddha." While exploring the role and significance of regional Hindu traditions that emerged at the beginning of the early medieval period out of an interaction of elements of classical Hinduism with autochthonous local religious practices, Eschmann holds that in his earliest form as an image of Vishnu, Jagannath was known as Narasimha, the man-lion avatar of Vishnu who fights the evil demon and ends religious persecution. Her contention is based on the fact that the Nabakalebar ritual considers the Jagannath figure to be Narasimha: "Narasimha is that ontological aspect of Jagannath, which resides in the later theology; it can be easily associated with tribal cults and was probably instrumental for developing Jagannath iconography." (Eschmann 1978-79)

From a different perspective, the image of Jagannath is strikingly similar to that of Ekapada Bhairava, which has one foot

- a manifestation of Siva, which was prevalent during the Bhaumakara period. Some Tantrik texts refer to Puri as a seat of Shaktism, Vimala as the Shakti and Jagannath as his Bhairava. Also, the 'Utkal Khanda' of Skanda Purana describes Subhadra as the Shakti of Jagannath. The existence of the Saptamatruka image inside the temple and Puri-based Shaiva shrines of Markandeswara, Pataleswar and Lokanath corroborate such a viewpoint.

Jagannath is also popularly known as Purushottama. Vamana Purana, a work of the seventh century AD, refers to the Purushottama deity of Puri. The Sarada Devi temple inscription of Maihar (Satna district of Madhya Pradesh), assigned to the middle of the tenth century AD, refers to the Purushottama deity of Odra country, located on the seashore. The literary and epigraphic sources affirm the reputation of the Purushottama deity of Puri in the tenth century AD. However, an epithet of Vishnu has Tantrik significance, representing its erotic aspects. Purushottama is to be found with Lakshmi, the female erotic partner. Jayadeva, in his Gitagovinda, dealt with the erotic sport of Krishna with Radha and identified Radha with Kamala or Lakshmi, the consort of Narayan. He regarded Jagannath as Krishna. Subhadra was treated as Lakshmi in the Ganga period and even afterwards. Incidentally, the 'Purushottama Mahatmya' of Skanda Purana and Vishnu Purana refer to the female wooden image between Jagannath and Balabhadra as Lakshmi.

Manifesting from the sacred fossil of Lord Krishna (in the classic Gita



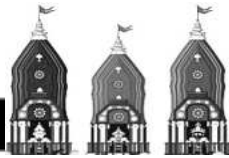
Govinda, Jayadeva delicately and immaculately brings out the finer and most fundamental virtues like love, longing, ecstasy and transcendence without any conscious attempt to mystify or to portray them into larger-than-life statures), legends say, Jagannath has acquired all the dispositions of sprightly Krishna, evergreen and youthful in myriad splendours and sweetness of love. Similarly, other Vaisnavas like Ramanuja, Ballavacarya, Ray Ramananda, Sri Chaitanya, Panchasakha Saint-Poets, Upendra Bhanja, Dinakrushna, Baladev Rath and many others perceived Him as Lord Krishna. Consequently, Srimandir rituals have been mostly Vaisnavised with greater emphasis on Krishna Leela.

Sufi Muslims like Salbega and Javan Haridas were great devotees of the Lord. The iconography of Jagannath has enabled every denomination to see the God of their heart's desire in Him. The all-embracing liberalism of the Jagannath Cult eventually influenced the Odishan culture. In the pre-Chodaganga period, Odisha was divided into four distinct cultural and political divisions: Utkal, Kangoda, Kalinga and Kosala. Centering around Jagannath, the political unification of Odisha into one unit was brought about, which ultimately helped the full blossoming of Odishan culture during the Surya Dynasty. Nobody questions whether He is Darubrahma, Purusottam, the Buddha-Relic, Jinanath, Dakshina Kalika, Pranav-Nirakar, Bhairav or Ganapati, or Lord Krishna, as alluded to time and again from the days of Adi Sankaracarya. He is the God of the masses and may be addressed fondly as

Kalia, Jaga, Kalamanika, Baliarbhuja, Chakadola and Mahabahu – a supernatural entity which responds to devotees equally and endearingly. Eventually, we can safely conclude that Odisha was not a closed socio-religious order; it was open to accepting and accommodating faiths and practices of different denominations, which has perhaps helped make impressive and formidable advances in various fields in contemporary India.

V

Thus, Odisha can best be defined through its racial and ethnic amalgamation that lives through its artistic and architectural heritage and its religious and charitable anchorage. This is indeed the land of archetypal magnetism, where abundant ancient architectural and artistic excellence gets assembled with scientific progress and development. The indomitable will, the spirit of self-sacrifice, enormous zeal and steadfast dedication to life and letters and devotion to the Supreme Lord Jagannath and humanistic values make it an interesting case of a rising Odisha within the ambit of a resurgent India (Vikashit Bharat). Hence, despite all superficial diversities, our life in illusion is expected to experience and endure the feeling of the 'oneness of being' - when many [things] are restored to some unity; "Bahujana sukha?ya Bahujan hita?ya cha" - "welfare of the many, the happiness of the many" being the mantra for our aspirational social order. However, the above musings on time and transformation validate that Odisha promotes faith and belief in the

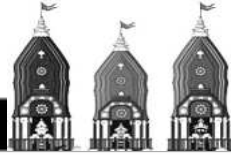


stated values, ascribing and ascertaining brotherhood, mutual love, and reconciliation. The specified values notwithstanding, Odisha, with nature's bounty, varied flora and fauna, and rapid development, represents the uniqueness created by the blend of tradition and modernity. It is rightly considered "The Soul of Incredible India."

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- ◆ Chatterji, Suniti Kumar (2014) *The People, Language and Culture of Odisha*, 3rd Edn. Bhubaneswar: Odisha Sahitya Akademi.
- ◆ Eschmann, A. et al. (eds.) (1978) *The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Orissa*, New Delhi: Manohar.
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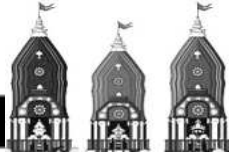


Lord Purushottama -Jagannatha and the Ganga Ruler Narasimha Deva I

Dr. Bharati Pal

Lord Purushottama Jagannatha the supreme deity of the universe played a very prominent role in the socio-religious and political life of Odisha. The origin of the *Puroshottama -Jagannatha* cult the presiding deity of the Puri around whom the religious life of Odisha has evolved from very ancient past shrouded in mystery. The deity *Purushottama – Jagannatha* has been referred in the older records like Puranas, Upanishada, stone and copper plate inscriptions. *Purushottma Jagannatha* is a term which was more in use for this deity in the southern part of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, but seems to have become widely popular since 13th century A.D. The first definite reference to deity *Purushottama* on the seashore and his *Ratha Yatra* (car festival) is found in the *Anargharaghava*¹ of the dramatist Murari. The writer Murari describe¹ *Purushottama* of dark blue colour resembling blue sapphire, residing on the seashore of the salt ocean and sporting with *Kamala* by drawing floral patterns on her breasts with the paste of mask. The advent

of the imperial Ganga dynasty marked a great revival of the said cult in Odisha. Under the royal patronage of the Ganga monarch the cult reached the height of glory. The Gangas who were *Saivas* for centuries switched over to *Vaishnavism* after the conquest of Odisha by Chodagangadeva. The Ganga king Chodaganga who claimed to have devoted to both *Mahesvara* and *Vishnu*, in his later years he called himself a devotee of *Vishnu* alone. The devotion of his successors to the great god *Purushottama-Jagannatha* of Puri received a great impetus at the dedication of the Ganga kingdom to that god by Anangabhimadeva III. The rulers of the Ganga empire considered themselves as mere deputies of the god *Purushottama-Jagannatha* of Puri to whom they regarded as the real lord of the dominion. The king Anangabhimadeva assumed the subordinate title *Rauta*² and claimed a feudatory or deputy of the god *Purushottama- Jagannatha*. After him his son and successor Narasimhadeva I also followed his footsteps and became a staunch



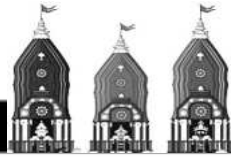
worshipper of the said deity. He was a staunch devotee of *Purushottama* cult. In many of his epigraphic records he describes himself as son of Lord *Purushottama - Jagannatha*.

Narasimhadeva I was the son of Anangabhimadeva III and queen Kasturadevi. He ruled from 1238 A.D. to 1264 A.D. under whom the Ganga empire reached its zenith. He was among the few Hindu kings of his time who took up an offensive strategy against the Muslims. In a series of fight, he extended his empire even beyond the banks of the Ganga. The Asankhali³ charter of Narasimhadeva II narrates that as result of the exploits of Narasimha I, the water of the river Ganga became as black as that of the Yamuna owing to the collyrium in the eyes of *Yavana* (Muslim) women of Radha and Varendra being washed by the tears and mixed into the waters. King Narasimha in one side strengthening the Ganga empire on the other side he followed the deputy ideology of his father. In the Kapilas inscription⁴ Narasimha like his father announced that he had humbled the pride of his enemies at the command (*adesa*) of the lord *Purushottama*. There are three small inscriptions engraved on the kalasa of the present Sikharesvara temple of the Kapilas hill. The inscription begins with the auspicious word svasti and states that Narasimhadeva constructed a temple for the god *Kailasasikharesvara* and it was the remarkable achievement of the king in all the four *yugas*, viz. *Satya*, *Dvapara*, *Treta* and *Kali*. The inscription describes that the king succeeded in subduing the power by

his arms the pride of his enemies in numerous battles at the command of the god *Purushottama- Jagannatha*. Next the epigraphs states that the king styled as *Paramamahesvara* and *Paramabhattaraka* as well as *Purushottama putra* and *Durga putra*. It clearly indicates that King Narasimha I was devoted to *Mahesvara (Siva)* and his consort *Durga* as well as to *Purushottama – Jagannatha*. His father Anangabhimadeva III also in one of the inscriptions of a Siva temple at Draksharama⁵ called himself as *Paramavaishnava* and *Paramamahesvara* as well as *Purushottama – putra*, *Rudra putra* and *Durga putra*. These facts point to the catholicity of the religious approach of the Ganga kings Anangabhimha and his son Narasimha I.

Narasimha's concept of kingship is also known from the series of sculptural representation from the world-famous Surya temple of Konarka. The Asankhali plate narrates that the king Narasimha I constructed the temple of Sun-God at Konakona (modern Konarka). The magnificent building is humbly mentioned in the charter as *Kutiraka* or hut. The sculptures in the temple depicts king Narasimha worshipping a triad consisting of a *Siva linga*, *Purushottama* and *Durga – Mahishamarddini*. There is no doubt that the king was worshipping the three major deities of Odisha, *Purushottama – Jagannatha* of Puri, *Siva* of Bhubaneswar and *Durga – Viraja* of Jajpura.

The 3rd inscription Narasimha I was compares with the great Boar (*Vishnu* in his



boar incartion) that raised up the *Vedas* and worlds from the ocean. Then it states that victorious Narasimha endowed with the epithet *Gajapati* (lord of elephants). Narasimha was the first king of the Odisha who bore the title of Gajapati, a title which became the most popular royal title in Odisha under the later Gangas and the Suryavamsis of Odisha.

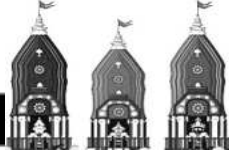
So, from the above discussion we presume that both *Saivism*, *Saktism* and *Vaishnavism* attained a pinnacle of glory under the royal patronage of the imperial Gangas.

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1. The Cult of Jagannatha and the regional Tradition of Odisha, pp. 89.
2. D.C.Sircar, EI, vol. XXVIII, pp. 235-258.
3. Idem, vol. XXXI, pp. 110-111.
4. Idem, vol. XXXIII, PP. 41-45.
5. SII, vol. IV, no1339.

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Niskam Karma is the Doctrine of Gita

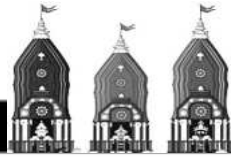
Uma Shankar Prasad

Krishna is perhaps the most beloved God in Hindu religion. Various titles including Gopalpriya (Lord of the cowherds), Manmohan (Bewildering the mind), and Dharmadhyaksha (Lord of Dharma), Krishna has many sides to his personality. Gita is the advice of Krishna to his most beloved Sakha Arjun on the Kurukshetra. *“The most popular Mukha Nisruta vani of Lord Krishna is Niskama Karma”*. Niskama is not mere worklessness, external passivity or idleness. It is the state of establishment in the experience that one is the Atman, pure spirit, the uninvolved witness of passivity of body-mind. Wilful worklessness amounting to idleness is not the aim.

When one's ego identifies itself with the body and feels 'I am the body', he becomes an actor, one involved in works. On the other hand, if he feels that 'I am the Atman', he remains as spirit, the pure witness, the state is called 'Niskama' or egoless passivity of the spirit. One is expected to do is to work, controlling the

senses by the mind and doing his duty with utter dedication and submission to the lord and without caring for the fruits. Practice of Niskama Karma is easier said than done. This because an attitude of being a witness does not come unless one feels detached. Nothing belongs to us. We came with nothing. Oxygen was provided to us and we are provided with food so that the body can last possibly a hundred years. Nature meets all our wants. Yes, the world is a well-endowed guest house. Thus, mutually we can live, helping each other, according to nature's design. The creator is the material cause of creation in addition to being the efficient cause. Once the relationship between man and God is reconciled, it will be easy to practice detachment, slowly graduating to the state of being a witness. Creation and Time are endless, being cyclic. The process of creation has a purpose for the jiva or individual soul and that is to help him evolve to regain his full divine nature.

One will be successful in doing niskama karma when he can dwell in the state

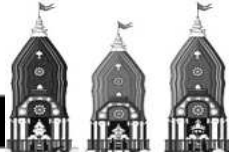


of a witness in discharging life's duties. This can happen in two stages, the first in which all fruits of action are dedicated to God. This is grateful acceptance as Prasad, a divine blessing. All the Gopangana never thought that her lord Krishna or Sakha Krishna detached from them as he always remains in their heart due to their niskama Karma. Thus, it is Bhakti that completes the

Gita doctrine of dedicated and detached work as practice of niskama karma leads one eventually to Niskama siddhi- an interim stage before enlightenment.

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Khordha,
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The Tradition and the Triumphs of Ratha Yatra at Jeypore

Dr. Paresh Rath

INTRODUCTION

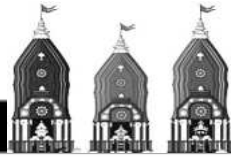
The present Jeypore town was the capital city of the then Nandapur-Jayapura kingdom. After *Sila Vamsi* kings (Rulers of the Stone Race), it was ruled by the *Surya Vamsi* kings (Solar Dynasty Rulers) for more than half a millennium from the year 1443 to 1951. The king of Jeypore was known as the most affluent king of south India and the festivals observed here were patronised by the king with great pomp and fervor. The large palace standing in centre of the city as a monument is a mute witness of its glorious past.

‘Ratha Yatra’ and ‘Dashahara’ are the two main festivals among the festivals observed at Jeypore city from the days of Jeypore Zamindari. The estate abolition act was passed in the year 1951 and after the abolition of the Zamindaris the management of temples and festivals related to the deities went to the hands of the Endowment department (Jeypore Debottar).

HISTORY

‘*Haataparias*’ (organising heads) and ‘*Bethias*’ (committed labourers) in different villages of the kingdom to participate in the festivals held at the capital at Jeypore. He had provided lands in the village for their self sufficiency which were said to be the land of the village deity, to be managed and earned for the priest’s family. These lands were called Pujaribeda. In return they had the obligation to provide labour and representation at the palace during ceremonial functions.

During the reign of Vikram Dev Verma, the new temple of Lord Jagannath and Lord Sri Ballaba Narayana was constructed at the same premises towards the South-West of the the new palace (Moti Mahal) and East side of the palace (Surya Mahal) of the Maharaja. The street connected so named is Narayan temple street. Every year there are Two car festivals observed in the city of Jeypore, one at Puruna Gada (Old Fort) and one at Main road near Nua Nahar (New Palace).



At Purunagad the chariot is pulled from the shrine of goddess Kalika to the temple of Lord Neelakantheswar on the same day when the Chariots of the lords pulled at Srikshetra, Puri, Odisha while the Chariots are pulled from Sri Raghunath temple to Sri Banko Matho on the next day at *Bada Danda* (Main road) of Jeypore.

CONJECTURES OF THE TRADITION OF PULLING THE CHARIOT - 'ONE DAY LATER'

The chariots of the Lords are pulled to roll on the road called '*Ratha Tana*' takes place on the same day throughout the country while at the city of Jeypore, this is observed on the next day which is late by one day compared to all other car festivals. This is the courtesy of a royal tradition. There are several theories about this practice.

In one theory, the palace of the king of Jeypore kingdom being located at Puranagada (Old fort); a village situated in the outskirts of the city which is presently the part and partial of extended modern Jeypore. This old fort being the first establishment when the ancient capital of Nandapur was shifted to Jeypore and which was given the first preference on Rath Yatra and the other day the Chariots were pulled from Sri Raghunath temple near the new Raj Nabar on the main road Jeypore. According to old-timers, bonded labourers or bethias used to be engaged in pulling a 60 feet tall rath at the Puranagada and Maharaja would do the '*Chhera Pahanra*'. The same engaged bethias would join at main

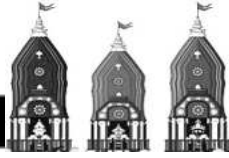
road of Jeypore for the festival after a day after completing the chariot pulling ceremony at Puranagada.

However, all other rituals like *Pahandi bije* (bringing the deities in a procession), '*Ratha Alati*' are performed on the first day.

“Though the tradition of engaging bethias was abandoned within few years of abolition of the Zamindari system, the practice of pulling the chariot at Jeypore a day late has been followed since then.

Some old-timers say that due to the death of a close family member of the royal family the pollution day was avoided and the festival got delayed by a day but the tradition continued. In the past the king of Jeypore used to have a number of Elephants who were engaged to push and pull the tall chariots during Ratha yatra and It is also heard that in the past, due to the death of the '*Pata Hati*' (Queen elephant), the pulling of car was delayed by a day. Some historians depict that the car festivals of different cities were observed after a permission from the temple of lord Jagannath at Puri and the delegated messenger of Jeypore royal office who carried the permission letter got delayed to return from Puri with the permission letter so the festival was delayed by a day and the tradition of pulling the Car on the next day continued.

In the continued tradition, the Lords after pahandi remain on the cars and the rituals, offerings, worships and darshan are allowed to the devotees on its first day and



pulled to reach the Gundicha temple on the second day. The chariots here used to be 60ft with 16 wheels with a rope of about 60 metre tied to pull the chariot. In the recent days the height of the chariot has been reduced to about 35ft, however, the design of the chariot has been preserved with the traditional craftsmen family making it for decades.

VILLAGES: BATA JAGANNATHPUR AND RANIGADA

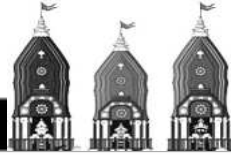
All the rituals of the car festival at Jeypore goes parallel with the car festival of village Bata Jagannathpur near village Kebdi under Jeypore block in Koraput district. This village is inhabited by 45 households with a population of about 250. The communities dwelling here are Mali and Paraja and few Bramhins engaged at the temple. History relates that Maharaja Vijaya Chandra of Jeypore had fought for Gajapati Purushottam Deva during Kanchi war when he had to have his camp at this village and had worshipped Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra in a cottage. In another local memoire it is understood that Jeypore Maharaja had interrupted to settle a dispute among two brothers of neighbor place at Bastar and there was threat when Jeypore Maharaja with family had to stay hide at this village. Lords were worshipped and Ratha Yatra was observed. The village so named Bata Jagannathpur and its neighbor village where royal family and queen stayed is now known as Rani Gada. After Zamindari abolition these temples are under the management of the Debottar Endowment

department. During festival the Wood for the chariots, the auspicious ropes for the pulling of chariots and other worship materials are purchased at the same time. At Village Bata Jagannathpur the temple is famous as shrine of Sri Jagannath Swamy. Here the Pahandi and pulling is observed on the same day. Devotees mostly tribals from the nearby villages participate in the festival.

LORDS' TRADITIONAL SERVANTS / SEVAYATS

There are several families engaged with Sri Jagannath temple, its rituals and festivities. From sweet making to icon painting and flower supply to gods' decking these families and communities have been serving the lords for decades. The *Suara*, the *Gudia*, the *Chitrakar* and the *Badhei* all take up their responsibilities. The Chitrakar (Painter) Families of New Street complete their work during *anasara*. The sweet makers take the contract and commitment of supplying sweets from the pahandi day till bahuda yatra. The Badhei (Carpenter) crafts and checks the Chariot, its balance, its axis and wheels and fixes before it is set to roll on the *Bada Danda* (main road) during car festival.

At Jeypore one big Chariot and one small chariot are rolled during the car festival. On the big Chariot that carries the four Lords *Chaturddha Murtti* (Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Chakraraj Sudarshan) and on the small chariot Lord Patitapabana is carried.

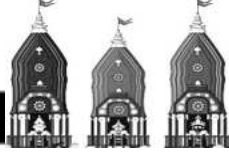


The construction of the Chariots has been gradually decreased by height after the ruling dynasties withdrawn their participation soon after Zamindari abolition. From the height of 60 feet Car at the old fort of Purunagada it was shortened to 52 feet. Later the big car at main road was constructed to a size of 45 feet. Craftsman Nanda Kamara designed the car from the year 1985 to 1991. After his demise his son Damburu carried the work for about 25 years. His son Dhanarjaya Kamara took up the succession of craftsmanship from the year 2016. The height of the Chariot then increased to the size of 52 feet when the Debottar department received wood from the forest department. During this year's car festival in July 2024 at Jeypore devotees will witness a New Chariot with the whole new wood from the dense forests of Ramagiri near Sri Gupteswar cave shrine in Boipariguda block of Koraput district.

Saal (Soria Robusta) wood is used for the construction of the Chariots. "We fourteen team members are working for the last two months and the height also will be more than before" says Dhanarjaya Kamara the head craftsman from village Balia Paliguda.

On the auspicious day of *Pahandi* the lords mount to the Chariot by the devotees and sevayats and worshipped on the chariot. This day till late night devotees are allowed for Darshan and ritual offerings, prayers. The next day after Ratha Alati and declaration by the debottar department the car is pulled up to Sri Banka Matha where lords stay at the *Adapaghar* till *Dasabataara*. On Bahuda Yatra the chariot halts near Sri Chaitanya temple where lords ritually take the traditional sweet of *Poda peetha* from *Mausi Maa* then the other day the chariot is pulled till Raj Mahal Chowk from where the *Daitapatis* of Samanatar street, carry the lords to the temple.

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Baishnavism and Poet Jaydeb

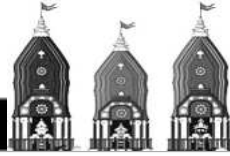
Dr. Subhrajyoti Moharana

Baishnavism played a crucial role in building the life and religious career of the famous Sanskrit poet Jayadeb was a great devotee of Lord Jagannath. Lord Jagannath is otherwise known as Lord Bishnu from which the word 'Baishnab' has been derived. A devotee or a follower of Bishnu is called Baishnab. Therefore, poet Jayadeb was a Baishnab. He was very much influenced by the cult of Jagannath, which was reflected in his life. He was associated with the temple at Puri when the king Kamadev ruled. He had also a remarkable influence over the king as he was permitted by the king to offer special prayers in the temple. He considered Jagannath as Krishna and dedicated himself at the lotus feet of Lord Krishna.

The origin of Jagannath shrine and His cult are shrouded in mystery. Although the historians established the fact that the present temple of Lord Jagannath was built by Ananta Barman Chodaganga Deva of Ganga dynasty during 12th Century AD, still a lot of theories have been propounded as to the existence of Jagannath shrine and cult

from time immemorial on the basis of the evidence as enshrined in some epigraphic records, archaeological remains and Purnanic literature. Anyway, Jayadeb, the celebrated poet of Sanskrit, remembered for his strong devotion for Lord Jagannath, was born in 12th century AD. During that period the present temple of Lord Jagannath was constructed in Odisha. The main objective of the composition of Gitagobinda by Sri Jayadeb was to offer his humble prayer, dedicated devotion, uncommon respect and extraordinary feelings of love for Lord Jagannath, who has been regarded as the focal point of the socio-political and socio-religious movements in Odisha through the immortal songs of its lyrical poetry.

As per the historical and legendary records, Lord Jagannath was worshipped as Purushottam or Nilamadhaba or Madhaba in ancient time. The name Jagannath came to being probably at a period when the socio-religious movement got momentum in Odisha with the advent of Shree Chaitanya, who spent about 18 years at Puri. Shree



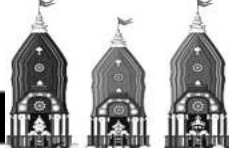
Jayadeb has mainly used the words 'Madhaba', 'Jagadisha', 'Hari', 'Krishna' etc. for Lord Jagannath and this unique literary contribution is intended to propitiate the poet's cherished Lord. It is not out of place to mention that recital of Gitagobinda in front of Lord Jagannath was made mandatory by Gajapati King, Prataprudra Deva.

Jayadeb, the celebrated poet of Sanskrit literature of the 12th century AD is remembered for his work 'Gitagobinda', a unique lyrical poetry with deep devotional intensity and extraordinary musical composition. The melodious songs and erotic appeal of the story as described in Gitagobinda have a charming effect on the readers. The poem describes the amorous dalliances of Radha and Krishna in such a methodical, elegant and stylistic manner, one can find himself completely submerged in the ocean of devotion having a deep current of Vaishnavite mysticism which started in Odisha from twelfth century AD virtually with the religious and philosophical sects. Jayadeba's Gita Gobinda, as is alleged, is not an episode that illustrates the form of Sahajiya love where in Krishna has been described as freely mixing and dancing with the cowherd women and as embracing and kissing them. The further allegation that the form of love described by Jayadeb in his love lyric has transgressed all human laws and ethics made to control sexual relation between men and women is far from truth. The free mixing of Krishna with the cowherd women has been described by Sridharswami, the most authentic commentator on "Shreemad Bhagabat", as the union

of almighty with the sparks of his own prowess, as a child enjoys by mixing himself with his own sub shadows reflected through a mirror or any transparent object of the world. Lord Krishna, in the same way, mixes with the cowherd women, who actually symbolize the sparks of Krishna's own reflection.

The lyrical poetry of Bhakta Kabi Jayadeb opens with the verse that highlights the guiding capacity of a woman, Radha, stands for Shakti of power the indeterminate 'Mahamaya' who revolves the wheel of his world and without whom the Purusa, the primordial being of Krishna as described by Jayadeb, is completely incapable even of movement, what to speak of creation. The poet feels that in a world, covered with darkness by the clouds, a man cannot reach his destination without the help of a woman, who represents all that is required for dispelling the darkness. A true devotee finds the entire episode to be symbolic while a sensualist can only relish the passion in its nude display. The purpose of Gitagobinda is to instill a deep sense of devotion towards a divine power and that is the reason why the recital of this lyrical poetry has been made compulsory in the temple of Lord Jagannath.

The socio-religious condition of Odisha that led to the composition of this devotional poetry in twelfth century by the poet Jayadeb, was marked by four important cultural events. These are (i) The tradition of Madhaba worship particularly in the Prachi Valley, where the poet was born (ii)



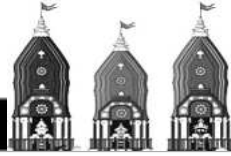
Carving of the incarnations of Lord Krishna in various Vaishnava temples of Odisha in general and on the lintel over the lions gate of Jagannath temple of Puri or the Dasabatar theory (iii) influence of Lord Jagannath and significance of Purushottam Dham and (iv) Visits of great Vaishnava saints from south like Madhabacharya, Vishnuswamy Nimbrakacharya, Ramanujacharya and theory of 'Radha' propounded by Sri Nimbrakacharya. All these four factors along with the resultant factor of composition of Gita Gobinda in the twelfth century contributed substantially for generating an environment of Odisha towards Bishnu or Lord Jagannath of Purushottam paving way for Vaishnavism to gain momentum in the sacred land of Lord Jagannath. Of course, the patronage of the kings of Ganga dynasty, was remarkable in promoting this Bhakti movement in Odisha.

Jayadeb was a true Baishnab in true sense. He worshipped Lord Jagannath as Lord Krishna. He found no difference between Krishna and Jagannath. The words like

Madhab and Jagadish have very often been used in his immortal work Gotagobinda, which proves that Jayadeb was a great devotee of Lord Krishna who is also known as Lord Jagannath. Since he was an ardent follower of Baishnavite theory, he spent many years in Puri, the abode of Lord Jagannath. He and his greatest scholarly work the Gitagobinda will be dazzling in the sky of Indian literature for all times to come.

The famous Sanskrit work has influenced the life and culture of Odisha for years together and the celebrated poet Jaydeb of Geetagobinda fame has become a house-hold name in Odisha. As long as the cult of Lord Jagannath exists, so long the name of Jaydeb will remain fresh in the minds of the people in Odisha.

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Bandhu Mohanty, the Great Devotee of Lord Jagannath

Prof. Balabhadra Ghadai

Lord Jagannath is highly regarded as *Bhakta Batsala* (devotee friendly), *Bhabagrahi* (receiver of pure devotional thought) and *Bhakta Rakshakari* (protector of the dignity of devotee) for ages together. The relation between the Lord and His devotee is reciprocal, as He clearly says in the Bhagavatgita(9:29):

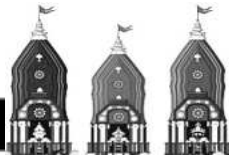
“Whoever renders service unto me in devotion is a friend - is in me and I am also a friend to him.”

The friendship between Bandhu Mohanty, a pious devotee of Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe is the essence around which many stories have been told and retold. Bandhu Mohanty was born in the town of Jajpur in Odisha. Being very poor it was hard for him to take care of his wife, two daughters and a son. But he was always assuring his wife that he had a great friend who would take care of him.

Once during harsh famine period, Bandhu and his family spent two days

without any food. Aggrieved by the cries of her hungry children, Bandhu’s wife told him, “You keep chanting about the rich, prosperous and generous friend of yours who lives in Puri. Why don’t we go to him instead of starving here?” The friend about whom Bandhu mentioned was Lord Jagannath, but his wife did not realize the essence of what her husband was saying all the time. So his wife compelled him to go to the house of the friend whosoever he was. Bandhu did not know what to do and finally thought to take his family to Lord Jagannath’s temple in Puri.

In those days, it was very troublesome to travel from Jajpur to Puri which is more than 140 km away. They had to walk through the thorny jungle path which takes more than four days. Somehow they were able to reach the holy abode of Lord Jagannath in Puri by the arrangement of Lord Jagannath. It was night already. When they reached in front of the temple, the aura of faith and spirituality made them spellbound. For quite some time, all of them



held hands and just kept looking at the grandeur of the temple. Hundreds of devotees were thronging the main entrance. The guards or *pratiharies* were monitoring the visitors. Bandhu wanted to take his family inside the sanctum sanctorum to have a glimpse of his dearest friend. But he knew they would not be allowed inside by the pratiharies since they were in rags. Hence, he instructed his family to join him in offering prayers from outside. After paying their obeisance to the Lord, Bandhu, along with his wife and children, left the temple premises.

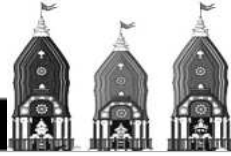
While looking for a suitable shelter to spend the night, they reached a place called Pejanala. As per custom, a huge quantity of rice is cooked in the temple complex for the *Mahaprasad*. The gruel which remains is drained out and deposited at the Pejanala. Bandhu decided to spend the night there with his family. He brought some rice gruel from the Pejanala which the family ate. Seeing the condition of the place, which was bare and bereft of even the minimum of comforts, his wife asked, “You keep saying that your friend is wealthy and influential and that he will take care of you whenever you are in need. Yet, instead of taking us to his place why did you bring us here? Is it because your friend befriends only the rich like him?”

Bandhu ignored his wife’s barb and replied quietly, “My friend had too many visitors this evening. We will meet him tomorrow when he is free.” They all went to sleep. In the middle of the night, Bandhu

heard somebody calling him by his name. Awaking from sleep, he found a dark-skinned Brahmin standing with delicious items of food in a gold plate. The Brahmin told him, “Bandhu, your friend has sent Mahaprasad for you and your family. Please take it. He has also assured you that in the morning he will make all arrangements for you.” With these words the Brahmin handed over the plate. Bandhu woke up his family and they had the most delicious meals of their lives. As he saw his children eating to their heart’s content, savouring every morsel, tears of gratitude welled up in Bandhu’s eyes.

After the meal, Bandhu washed the plate and went to give it back to the Brahmin. He searched for him in vain but the Brahmin seemed to have disappeared. Bandhu wrapped the plate in a rag and put it beside him. He then thanked his dear friend for his kindness and happily went to sleep.

The next morning the priests found the big gold thali in which Mahaprasad is offered to the Lord was missing. The news of the theft spread all over Puri. Gajapati Prataprudra Dev, the king of Khurda, dispatched his soldiers to Puri as well as neighbouring areas to look for the sacred vessel. One of the soldiers while scouting the Pejanala area, found Bandhu and his family lying there in one corner. Since the five of them looked rather odd sitting huddled up, he came close to have a look. To his great surprise he saw the *sunu thali* kept there, covered with a rag. The soldiers dragged him roughly to the king. Bandhu



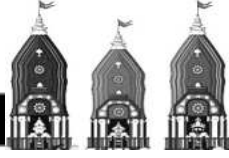
told everything honestly but no one believed him. They took him as the thief and produced him before the king accusing him for stealing the plate. His wife and children were left to suffer on their own. Still Bandhu's faith in his friend Lord Jagannath did not waiver one bit. He had confidence that his friend would save him and his family.

While Bandhu was calmly waiting for deliverance, his friend Lord Jagannath, sitting on the *Ratna Singhasana*, was very upset. That night the king had a dream. Lord Jagannath had flown to the palace atop his mighty *Garuda*. He appeared before the king Prataprudra and narrated the entire story about the unfortunate and innocent Bandhu Mohanty. Also, Lord Jagannath told to the king to release his friend immediately and all arrangements must be made so that he and his family can stay with dignity and honour. The king got up and rushed to Puri. He himself went to the prison and released Bandhu. He then begged forgiveness for all the injustice done to him. Later, Gajapati

Prataprudra appointed Bandhu as the *kharasodha* or the custodian of accounts of the temple. He arranged accommodation for Bandhu and his family at the south gate of the temple. The descendants of Bandhu continue to occupy the position of custodians of accounts to this day.

The story shows that Lord Jagannath is always enthusiastic and kind towards His devotees and behaves them like a friend and a companion. He never deserts His true devotees. He can even leave His *Ratna Singhasan* to rescue his dear friend.

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The Genesis of The Panda System

Damodar Pradhani

From the pages of history, it is revealed that King Chodagangadeva was a great warrior, who ruled a vast territory extending from the Ganges in the north to the Godavari in the south. Records suggest that he possessed as many as ninety-nine thousand elephants in his army. In the process of warfare, he defeated the kings of Utkal and Vergi, where he erected two pillars of victory each decorated with a beautiful necklace of goddess Sri, symbolising the glory of his great victory.

With this victory over Mandara of Gouda and Chedin of Ratnapur, the King Chodagangadeva acquired huge amount of wealth. The wealth was carried, as per a popular tradition, on the back of his war elephants and was poured into a well dug inside the premises of Lord Jagannath temple at Puri. The well is on the north side of the temple and is called as 'Suna Kua' or the 'golden well'.

When the well was filled till the brim, the idea of construction of the temple was

conceived. Albeit, there is an enigma regarding as to who built the Puri Jagannath temple, it is commonly accepted that King Chodagangadev initiated the construction of the temple, the completion of the temple was during the reign of King Anangabhima Dev II in 12th AD.

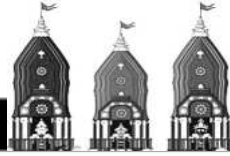
The 'Tantra Yamala' and the 'Kalika Purana' describe the 'Darurupi Jagannath' as the presiding deity of the Purusottam Kshetra in Utkala. The Kalika Purana goes as far as to say that Lord Jagannath is the supreme deity of Udra Desa. The relevant verse runs as follows:

"Bharte Utkaladese susange Purusottamah..

Darurupi Jagannath Bhaktanomabhayapradah.."

In mythological angle, if we give credence regarding the genesis of Pandas or Sevayats of Lord Jagannath, we have to refer the writings of Niladri Mahadoya. According to Niladri Mahodaya,

"Srustatan Vishnu dharmakyaan tatpujasu niyuktabaan..



Atho ninjasatha srusta dwidha bipraduayang punnah..

Atah brahma suran sarbanubach bijitendriyaah..."

The essence of the verse is that Lord Brahma has created two generations of residual Brahmin sects involved in the service of Lord Vishnu. Out of the two Brahmin sects, one will be engaged in the puja rituals of the Lord and the other one will be engaged in serving the Lord. After creating two Brahmin sects, Lord Brahma directed the community of Lord dwelled in heaven to go to martya taking birth in shape of human being and serve the husband of Mahalakshmi, i.e. Lord Jagannath in Nilachal Dham and associate themselves in various rituals of Lord Jagannath. Till the end of Lord Brahma's tenure, the various Lords after taking birth as human beings, under the direction of Lord Brahma, are doing service and Puja rituals.

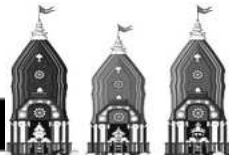
Hence the genesis of sevayats are heavenly in nature and they are linked with the gods of heaven and that is why they are treated as God's representatives on earth. Crores of devotees don't hesitate to touch their feet. The Niladri Mahodaya also recommends not to treat the sevayats as human beings, but respect them honorably presuming them as Lord. Such a tradition still persists.

The King was in a quandary for quite some time to ascertain the ritualistic ways to worship the Darudevata, the supreme Lord. However, King Anangabhimadeva established the system of temple administration in a very pragmatic manner.

According to 'Madala Panjee' he prescribed for the first time, 36 types of duties for the sevakas or servitors known as 'Chhatisanijoga.' These servitors are popularly known as Pandas. The system of Nijoga is still in vogue in Puri Jagannath temple. Due to multifurcations, the number of nijogas has grown to 119 as per the Record of Rights of Puri temple, with the Gajapati Maharaja being the most prominent sevayat of the deities.

Although, the main function of the Pandas was restricted to certain rituals related to the comforts of the Lord, the role of the Pandas was akin to that of the Christian missionaries of the 19th century. The main function of the Panda was to preach religion among the people of the entire country and to render diplomatic service for the State as well.

Due to the sincere and selfless endeavour of the Pandas, the financial position of the temple grew noticeably. The Pandas and their representatives (Gumastas) were responsible to assist the King by secretly gathering information about the movement of the enemies and to carry out the painstaking job of attracting pilgrims to visit Srikshetra. The Pandas also learnt the diverse languages spoken by pilgrims coming from all over the country as well as the multiplicity of Indian culture and developed the character and image for working as a coordinating link to the varying multitude. Thus, the servitor community emerged as an important agency for religious assimilation of the country and



through their activities, Puri attained a pan India status.

In the Panda system, various groups or 'Nijogas' are entrusted with different duties of the Lord. While the 'supakaras' are engaged in cooking, the 'Pujapandas' are responsible for serving food to the Lord. The 'Pratiharis' are responsible for maintaining law and order and the 'Singharis' look after wrapping the Lord with proper attire. The 'Daitas' have the most important role to play during the Rath Yatra and 'Nabakalebar'. With other sevayat groups assuming much less importance, the pilgrims consider Daitas as the favoured lot of the Lord.

In the present Panda System, the sevayats are involved in tourism business, attracting pilgrims all over the world to visit Puri for Lord Jagannath 'darshan' and 'mahaprasad'. The system of 'Annadana Atika' is still in vogue in the Puri temple.

Every year, millions of devotees visit Puri to have a glimpse of Lord Jagannath. Every devotee who visits the temple is assisted by his 'family Panda'. Such an association cuts across generations as per the "Jajamani" system, which prevailed during the feudal society. The Pandas of the Jagannath temple take utmost care of their 'Jajamanas'. They arrange for their stay at Puri, smooth darshan of the Lord, eating of Mahaprasada, etc. They even arrange 'dry prasad' for the near and dear ones of the devotees.

The Pandas never ask for any remuneration in exchange of the services

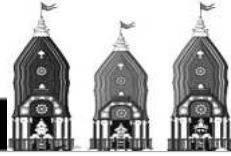
provided by them. It is the devotees who know the system of offering Annadana Atika to the Pandas. In certain scenarios, the 'Jajamans' also borrow financial assistance from the Pandas for their immediate requirements at Puri and they repay them through money order or otherwise. On a daily basis, the Pandas receive huge number of money orders and through other modes of payment.

The Pandas also visit their Jajamans to attend the religious and social functions as the representative of Lord Jagannath in their native places. Their presence in social and religious functions is considered to be very auspicious.

If one compares the cost of the services provided in the major religious shrines, the amount paid by the devotees of the Lord to the Pandas is absolutely miniscule. The Anna Prasada and 56 Bhog items prepared by the servitors of the temple is a unique feature of Lord Jagannath. The devotees have enormous respect and reverence for the Pandas and greet them by touching their feet whenever they meet. It can also be deemed that the Pandas are the sevaks of the devotees of Lord Jagannath.

Ninety five percent of the devotees are satisfied with the service rendered by the Pandas in Puri temple. Only a few people are there who aren't. But these issues are magnified so much that it gives a bad reputation to the entire Panda community, which is a matter of grave concern.

Every male member of the sevayat family has got the right to perform Pandagiri

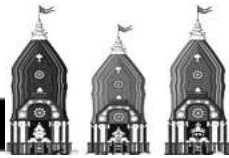


in the temple. Although their stipulated service may or may not be substantial, but nobody can deny them to perform service to the Lord (to the Nijoga that he belongs to). Now, the time has come to relook at the 'Panda system' and bring about positive reforms without hurting any religious sentiments of any sevayat. A complete overhaul of the system has become imminent, especially in the wake of recent occurrences within the temple premises as well as the various harassment cases brought to light by the devotees.

The temple administration can ignore these events only at the peril of

famous Jagannath culture. The sevayats must own the responsibility to bring out reforms wherever necessary so that the image and perception of the Pandas from the pilgrims' point of view is improved and their trust in Pandas is restored in a respectable manner.

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A Miracle in Sri Mandir's History & Amorous Art -A Theoretical Aspect

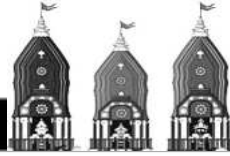
Himanshu Shekhar Bhuyan

Crime & Guilt from Disobeying the Master

Once Indra ascended the throne and was surrounded by royal splendor in the Devasabha. When Lord Jupiter entered, Indra, either delayed or out of his mind, did not get up and greet him. As a result, the Guru felt insulted and went to the place where he was. Indra was later repented as he was unable to honor him, unable to even seek his forgiveness for his crimes. Gradually Indra became restless and weak due to the crime of disobeying the Guru. Fortunately, in the company of Vishwarupa (Tvasta's son), by dint of Narayan Kabach, Indra was saved and reassured. By whom Indra was pacified and freed from crime, the Vishwarupa, out of his mother's love helped the demons (Asuras) to some extent, and one day Indra got angry with him and killed. As a remedy, the Rishis tried to persuade Indra to absolve himself of such crimes, but he neglected to do so, and felt as if he was burdened with a great crime or sin.

Sensuous Effect of Indra's Sin

In order to get rid of that sin, Indra finally gained peace by sharing the burden of sin with trees, water, land and women. After this kind of sacrificing, because of Indra's sins, when someone cut down the trees those became dead but with Indra's blessings, those were revived and sprouted again. As a result of Indra's acceptance of sins, after the trees were cut down, a slight liquid like substance that sticks to something came out of trees's branches. As the water took the share of Indra's sin, it was increased by the mixing of the water with that full force. But because sin took part in it, the water foamed and foamed as a result. Due to the blessings of Indra, the holes or pits formed in the ground were no longer like before and appeared to be filled in many ways. But the barren land was seen as a sign of Indra's acceptance of the sin. Those areas were totally dried and it was found that there were no bushes or trees growing on the ground.



As the woman took part of Indra's sin, the woman's sexual power remained intact due to Indra's blessing. But due to the effects of sin, the woman began to menstruate month after month. It is this change of woman that is relevant here.

Amorous Idols: Like Earthing for thunderbolts

Due to the fact that the sexual power of a woman is long-lasting and intact than that of a man, and due to the fact, the man is prone to intercourse, and the consciousness of the sexual pleasure of both the male and female begins to increase. It is said that Indra does not strike thunderbolts on these men and women because such an environment is created due to Indra's partaking of sins. The pair of idols of mutual union with the norms of male and female were made to be long-lasting or eternal and carved in the temple in the form of stone and lightning will not strike on it and the temple will be protected as if it were to last forever. Considering this to be reliable, the art historians mentioned the rules of carving all these sculptures in art history.

'...Na Na Mithun Bandhi Hi Shilpa Shastranusaratah...' ('Shilpa Prakash')

A pair of idols of human beings are placed in any temple and the same idols are carved in Jagannath Temple as per the rules of architecture. The location of these statues for protection from lightning seems true and logical.

A few years ago, there was a lightning strike in the corner of the fire

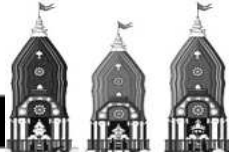
(agnikona) near the wall of the Shri Lingaraj temple. But the main temple of Shri Lingaraja and other temples in the interior were not damaged anywhere. The temple was also struck by lightning many years down the line. No harm was done.

Despite Disputes: Scriptural Solution

How Lord Srijagannath made it happen in Nilachala kshetra or Shreekshetra is worth mentioning here. The amorous idols of Srijagannath temple were widely criticized by some who were ignorant of the idols, which were meant to protect against lightning. The controversy over the placement of these idols in the temple of Shri Jagannath, and the controversy that arose between religious sects, is a thing of the past. The Pandits of the Muktimandapa Sabha won by presenting a valid argument that the presence of those sexually explicit idols in that temple is scripturally supported by the 'Skanda Purana' and the 'Agni Purana'. Almost thirty two years ago, this author had discussed all these historical issues in widely circulated columns and AkashVani (All India Radio).

Amorous Application in the Culture of Car Festival

This author has highlighted this issue through articles in widely circulated and published magazines in the past that there is a lot of theoretical mysteries hidden in the application of the work in culture as well as in the justification of this art in architecture. Even in our chariot culture, the story



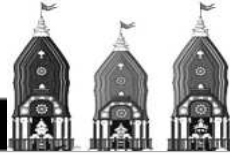
of charioteer's service in the chariot festival is based on the philosophy of 'Kama Varg' among the four Vargas (Chatur-Vargas), and that it is topmost Buddhist mysticism, has already been presented by this humble researcher in 'Utkal Prasanga' (1994, Rath yatra, issue) thirty years ago. While the tradition of Khuntia's (charioteer's) or Dahuka's shouted songs during the 'Rukuna Rathayatra' of Shri Lingaraja Mahaprabhu is being continued till today and has shown the best of its antiquity. The tradition has been broken for several years during the Rathotsava of Shri Jagannath held later on and this humble writer has already presented it to the Muktimandap Pandits to inform and persuade the administrative authorities about its revival.

Lightning in Sri Mandir was a mystery & miracle

A few years ago, there was a lightning strike in the corner of the fire attached to the wall of the Srilingaraj temple. But the main temple of Shri Lingaraja and other temples in the interior were not damaged anywhere. Even a few days ago, the lightning incident that happened on Mausi Maa Temple (Rameshwar Temple), the rhythm area of Lord Lingaraj Mahaprabhu's Rukuna Rathayatra, has surprised many people. The Jagannath temple was also struck by lightning many years ago. Eyewitnesses and other scholars and devotees of that time felt that no harm was done, but that Lord Shri Jagannath had caused this in a play.

Needless to say, there must be some mysteries hidden in every ritual of Shri Jagannath's tradition, even in the routined rituals. His rhythmic events do not occur without reason. An event took place about one hundred and fifty years ago. After bathing the worshipping idols of Sri Jagannath temple three times on 'Ratnavedi', the water is drained through the lower drain on the side. It was seen that the water could not flow for several days and accumulated under the Ratnavedi. Day's routine was interrupted. The word reached the king's ears. Gajapati Maharaj then focused on its remedy.

Suddenly, nothing happened that day. The next day it was almost noon. Hot and dry environment! Suddenly, the sky was covered with dark clouds! The weather changed at once and a cold breeze or cool air began to flow. The atmosphere turned into an amusing stance. Then there was a momentary flash of lightning followed by a soft rumbling of thunder or clouds. The wind speed increased and the trees began to shake. Immediately the rain-faced sky suddenly appeared and everything became wet. Hundreds of devotees were gathered near 'Garuda Khumba'. Almost all directly observed - A swift luminous streak from the sky came over the devotees' heads. Entering the 'Ratnavedi', it was lost in a flash. The ground shook with a loud thunderclap. The devotees were astonished and bewildered and started chanting the name of the Lord in a mixture of fear and devotion.



A Huge Snake!!

Then it was seen that the water was draining through the side channel. The dismembered body of a huge snake was thrown out. Its entire body was scattered into pieces. The incident turned out to be that the snake was so big that it could not get out through the canal. There was water that was stuck there. This matter was unknown to all. But Omniscient (Antaryami) Lord came to know about it and immediately remedied it. A sudden change in the environment caused a flash of lightning to break the snake stuck in the pipe and clear the way. The bewilderment of the devotees was transformed into ecstasy of joy. They all by the glory of Lord's miracle became more convinced of this natural rhythm. Seeing that the difficulty was removed, the worshippers of the temple were divinely inspired to engage in their duties with redoubled zeal.

Conclusion

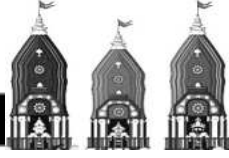
Whether the sculptors of the temple were aware of this mystery described in the earlier 'Shrimadbhagavat' Mahapurana is not a question here. At least so much is available that the sculptors were inspired and instructed by the scriptures to carve these to protect the temple from lightning. However, most people will not believe this when they

see lightning's protection or earthing systems in temples these days. Yet there are many spiritually-inquisitive people in this pious Odisha soil who, of course, even today think that - in this age of science - even if all these are consistent and possible, the superiority of classical judgment and Bhagavad Lilas or divine deeds of Lord are above all arguments.

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526, Nageswar Tangi
Vivekananda Marg, Bhubaneswar -2.



Saptadha Bigraha and Shree Jagannath Temple

Prabhat Kumar Nanda

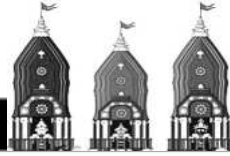
In public parlance it is generally known that, four idols Shree Balabhadra, Shree Jagannath, Debi Subhadra and Shree Sudarsana are worshipped in the Sanctum Sanctorum. Experts who have deep knowledge in the culture of Lord Jagannath have enunciated that, seven idols are worshipped on the grand throne (Ratna Singhasana). They are named as Shree Balabhadra, Debi Subhadra, Shree Jagannath, Shree Sudarsan, Shree Madhab, Debi Shreedebi and Debi Bhoodebi. They are named as Saptadha Bigraha.

Shree Nrusingha was the first deity commissioned in the Jagannath Temple. Such temple is now existing at southern side of the main temple and near Muktimandap Sabha. Later, the present main temple was constructed in 12th century. Different temples were constructed in different phases by various kings of Odisha. The analysis of the temple culture from historical point of view is very important for dissemination to the general public.

Jagannath temple is one of the most celebrated and renowned temples of the world. The initial temple where tribal king Biswabasu was praying Shree Neela Madhab and later the temple constructed by king Indradyumna are not available now. Many facts on the location of above temples are considered mysterious, as the religious scholars and historians have offered different views.

However, it is believed that initial concept of Lord Jagannath was derived from the cult of Shree Neelamadhaba and later as per the desire of Lord Jagannath, Indradyumna constructed the main temple and commissioned four idols in the temple.

Madala, Panji, a chronicle maintained in the temple depicting the history of the Jagannath culture, confirms that tyrant Rakta Bahu invaded Utkal i.e. ancient name of Odisha and made an attempt to dishonor the idols of the Jagannath temple. Hence finding no other way, King of Utkal had to remove idols from grand temple and



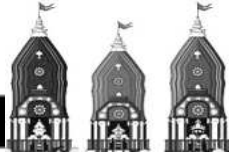
stationed in different areas of the state. For such purpose regular rites of the temple were affected for about 150 years. The King Jajati Kesari repaired the old damaged temple and constructed the new temple of about 60 ft. height (i.e. 38 hands length). Such concept was accepted by the famous historian, Shri Satyanarayan Rajguru. After the rule of King Jajati Kesari, another King named as Budhha Kesari repaired the temple. King Chodaganga Deb further constructed the main temple of Lord Jagannath and idols were commissioned in the year 1124-25 AD. All the scholars of Jagannath culture have accepted the above year as the commissioning of the grand temple at Puri. In copper plate inscription of Dasagoba (1198 AD) written in Sanskrit, it was inscribed as, who was such able king to construct grand palace of Purusottam and it was only Gangeswara. As per the above text of inscription, a small temple was constructed by King Jajati Kesari and the construction of the present main temple was completed in the year 1125 by King Chodaganga Deb.

Dr. Satyanarayan Rajguru in his thesis "Inscription of the temple of Puri and origin of Shree Purusottama Jagannath" has narrated that, the initial temple named as Purusottam temple was constructed on the sea shore of Shree Kshetra. Such temple was damaged and collapsed due to ravages of climate and non-maintenance. King Jajati Kesari (II) constructed a new temple and transferred deity from old temple to the new temple and such temple is existing as the temple of Lord Nrusingha. Dr. Rajguru also accepted the fact that, the present grand

temple was constructed by King Chodaganga Deb but he could not complete the construction of the total temple complex. Such were done in different phases from King Chodaganga Deb to Ananga Bhima Deb (III) and the regular rites were started from the year 1230. From another copper plate inscription of Nagari, it is revealed that, the construction of temples was made in different phases from King Chodaganga Deb to Ananga Bheema Deb (III). Scholars of Jagannath culture i.e., Pandit Harihar Mohapatra and Rabi Rai have also agreed with the above data.

The District Gazetteer of Puri recorded the data of the temple. The exact geographical location of the temple is Lat.19° 18' 17" and longitude 85° 51' 39". According to tradition, the temple was originally built by Jajati Kesari (Jajati-II of Somabanshi dynasty) on the right side of present shrine. Another tradition attributes the construction of the temple to Ananga Bheema Deb, the grandson of Anantbarman Chodaganga Deb. But the epigraphical records fully support that, it was Chodaganga Deb (1112 – 1148 AD) who built the present temple (the shrine hall and porch).

Apart from Puri Gazetteer as was maintained by the British administrators, other inscriptions available near Nrusingha temple also reveals that the chief architect named as Palla was engaged for the construction of grand temple. The temple work was supervised by King Chodaganga Deb and his sons. The Architect Palla donated a

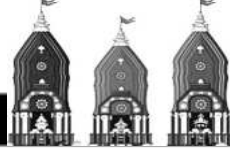


lamp named Akhanda Deepa to the temple of Lord Nrusingha. As per the version of renowned historians and architects of the world, the temple of Lord Jagannath is one of the best monuments of Kalinga style of architecture. Most of the temples of Odisha were constructed in the style of Rekha deula, Peedha Mukhashala i.e. Sanctum Sanctorum and the entrance to the temple. The temple of Lord Jagannath was constructed as per Rekhadeula architecture style and Pancha Ratha version. Out of different versions of architecture, as popularly known as Paga, two construction of Anuraha, two constructions of Konaka and one in Raha style were associated depicting the style of construction as Pancharatha.

As far as the height of the temple is concerned, the temple of Lord Jagannath is the highest in Odisha. At present, the temple is 214' 8" high from the road level. Two long boundary walls were constructed segregating the main activities of the temples and other activities of the temple. The temple occupies an area of 10.750 acres. Four main entrance doors as Singhadwara (east), Ashwadwara (south), Byaghradwara (west) and Hastidwara (north) are available for entry and exit of people. The most of the ancient temples of Utkal were constructed in four segments style. The main segment where the idol of the God exists is known as Garbhagruha (Sanctum Sanctorum), the Assembly place of devotees is known as Jagamohan, dancing hall as Nata Mandap and the place of displaying offerings (Food to the deities) Bhoga Mandap. The King Ananga Bhimadeb III con-

structed the Garbhagruha and Jagamohan, whereas Nata mandap was constructed by King Purusottam Deb (1461 -1495 AD) and the Bhoga Mandap was constructed by King Prataparudra Deb (1495 -1532 AD). The most of the parts of the temple were constructed by sand stone (Boulamala and Kunda Stone). As per the general temple architecture, different phases of construction i.e. from Pista (bottom panel) to Kalasa and Ayudha (top portion) were decorated with idols of different Gods, Goddesses, celestial figures, human beings and animals with erotic arts have also been carved on the walls of the temple. Three massive idols of Lord Tribikrama, Lord Nrusingha and Lord Baraha made of black granite stone were commissioned on the northern, western and southern sides of the temple. As per the scholars those are named as three side presiding deities in small temple to balance the existing huge temple.

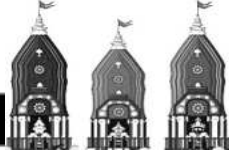
The height of Jagamohan is 120 ft, Natamandap and Bhogamandap are miniature in size i.e. 30 ft. and 50 ft. respectively. As per the scholars, the height of Natamandap was kept low for the clear visibility of the stone architecture of the main temple by devotees. The top of the temple is commissioned with Neela Chakra of 12 ft. high. It was constructed by 18 types of metals and the weight of such huge wheel is 150 kgs. About twenty number of flags of red and yellow colour are being hoisted daily on Neela Chakra with the support of bamboo, fostering the excellent view of the temple.



To a layman, only three prominent idols, made of Neem wood named as Shree Balabhadra, Debi Subhadra, Shree Jagannath are visible on the grand throne (Ratna Singhasana). The idol of Shree Sudarshan is placed behind the idol of Lord Jagannath at a corner. Any devotee having very much interest, can see Shree Sudarsan, the weapon of Lord Jagannath as placed behind the idol. Apart from the above four idols three other idols named as Shree Madhab, Shree Debi and Bhoodebi are also present. Combining the above, there are seven idols present on the grand throne in Jagannath temple. During Car festival the idols of Shree Balabhadra, Debi Subhadra, Lord Jagannath and Shree Sudarshan were taken out of the main temple for placing in different chariots. During such nine days, the idols of Shree Madhab, Shree Debi and Bhoodebi are offered with prayers on the grand throne. Hence, even at the time of absence of Lord Jagannath from the main temple, His representative Shree Madhab along with Shreedebi and Bhoodebi are worshipped in the temple. Hence the Ratna Singhasana or grand throne is never without the presence of Lords. Concept of offering prayers to

seven idols is associated with the offerings of the prayer to all Gods and Goddesses of different religious believers of India. All the different faiths as Baisnaba, Shakta, Shaiba, Tantra etc. have been ceremonially participating in different rites of the temple. Scholars have yet to revive more ethical thoughts about above seven idols. It is experienced that, the concept of Lord Jagannath is still a mystery and many aspects are left untold. Religious scholars and philosophers have rightly opined that, all the mystery belongs to Shree Purusottam i.e Lord Jagannath. Such are not fully known even to Gods and Goddesses. How can human beings with limited power can assess it? In Sanskrit it is narrated as “**Sarba Rahasya Purusottamasya, Debo na jananti Krutah Manushya**”.

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Gita Panda and Sri Jagannath

Dr. Sarat Chandra Biswal

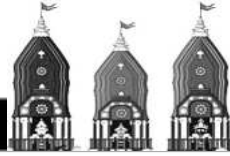
Daru Brahma Sri Jagannath is a living God. He does everything to protect his devotees from any distress when the devotee prays him with heart full of devotion. The life of Gita Panda is one of such innumerable examples, where deep faith and devotion of the devotee has made Him come forward from the jewelled throne to rescue him from the misery.

Gita Panda was a zealous devotee of Sri Jagannath and lived in Srikshetra Puri. He knew, Srimad Bhagabat Gita embodies the oral words of Lord Srikrishna. So due to his unwavering faith, he used to spend a lot of time in a day in reciting the Gita. A surrendered soul as he was, he depended upon his Lord for everything. Whatever happened, he accepted it as the desire of the Lord. Everyday, after finishing his morning works, he used to take darshan of Lord Jagannath. Then he would return back home and take his food only after reciting full eighteen chapters of Srimad Bhagabat Gita. His heart and soul was so much swayed by the thoughts of the Gita, that he felt the

existence of Srikrishna in everything that he saw. At times, while reciting the Gita, he danced with joy in ecstasy while tears rolled down his eyes and dampened his dress. People eagerly heard his recitation. He was popularly known in the society as Gita Panda.

Most of the times in a day he remained absorbed in reciting the Gita. After that he used to go outside to beg alm to earn a living. He had to be satisfied with whatever small quantity of alm that he got everyday and offered those to his wife for preparation of food. Their life of weal and woe rolled on in this way. To the misfortune of the people famine affected the locality that year leading to the scarcity of food stuff. It was a time when the rich became unable to feed their families, let alone the condition of these street beggars ? He felt it as a burst of thunder on his family. Helplessly the children cried in anguish due to the scarcity of food.

But Gita Panda as a great devotee of Lord Jagannath, was quite indifferent to the



sorrows and sufferings of this worldly life. His heart echoed with the invaluable teachings of the Bhagabat Gita-

“Sukha dukha Samekrutva labhalabhau jaya jayau

Tato yuddhaya yujyasva, naivam papamavapsyasi”

Srimad Bhagabat Gita(2/38)

Meaning- “Considering pleasure and pain, profit and loss, victory and defeat alike, engage yourself in the battle. Thus you will never incur sin.”

So in the midst of distress, he experienced true happiness being engrossed in the thought of God. One day, while Gita Panda was preoccupied in reciting the Gita, his wife came to him and told- “For you, the Gita is everything. But I am unable to tolerate the sufferings of the children.” She entreated- “Go and arrange some certain food for them. If you don’t arrange, we would all die of hunger .” Gita Panda with full faith on Sri Jagannath answered, “He is creator of all. He would provide us food. Have faith on him.”

The words of Gita Panda enraged his wife. She lost patience and scolded him in anger. “Without doing any work you are relaxing at home. Why do you expect the flow of wealth for nothing ?” The harsh words of his wife became unbearable to her husband. But being unperturbed he advised her one invaluable teaching by quoting the Bhagabat Gita. He said, “why are you losing faith on God being stricken by the fire of hunger ? Listen to me, what God says in the Gita-

“Ananya schintayanto mam, ye janah paryupasate

Tesham nityabhijuktanam, yogakshemam bahamyaham.”

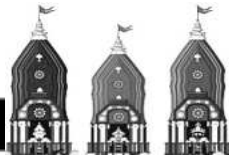
(Srimad Bhagabat Gita-9/22)

“Those who worship me with devotion, meditating on my transcendental form - to them I carry what they lack and preserve what they have.”

Gita Panda showed this couplet in palmleaf manuscript to his wife in order to bring her full confidence. But the infuriated woman could not realize the internal feelings of the devotee. On the other hand, immediately she took away the palmleaf manuscript from his hand and scratched it by drawing three lines on that verse with the help of an iron stylus. Gita Panda was devastated and cried helplessly seeing the unbearable work of his wife. He quivered and told his wife, “what a blunder you have committed !” You scratched the tongue of my Lord by cutting off the verse of the palm leaf. Lord has said, “He and His teachings are the same. Sri Krishna and Bhagabat Gita are inseparable like body and shadow. How painful it is ! You cut off that verse which is the noble oral advice of God !”

Hurt by the misdeed of his wife Gita Panda entered the room of worship, shut the door from inside and prayed God in a soulful voice.

Inside the room of worship, he offered hearty prayer to his revered Lord with single-minded devotion. Gradually the prayer became deeper and touched the



compassionate Lord on the jewelled throne of Srimandira. The Lord Daru Brahma descended down the throne and appeared in the human form of Bala Gopal holding a stick like a milkman, with the grandeur and beauty which outshined the beauty of thousand cupids. His had a body with glowing complexion of the colour of new clouds, full moon face, dazzling redlips, lotus eyes, enchanting smile, curly black hair, peacock feather on the head, anklets at the ankles creating tinkling sounds.

With this charming attire of a luggage bearer, He came out of Srimandir and proceeded towards the house of the devotee carrying varieties of materials on his shoulder and reached at the house of Gita Panda.

Keeping all those materials on the ground, He called out Gita Panda. At that time Gita Panda was meditating upon God and so he could not hear. His wife was not asleep due to hunger. By hearing the call, she came out of the house. She was surprised to see the charming Balagopal with huge luggage of materials at the door step. Never before had she seen such a pretty boy in her life. When she asked about him, the Balagopal replied, "My name is Balagopal. Don't you know that the best friend of Gita Panda resides near the temple? He is wealthy and his store house is always full with varieties of materials. I am his luggage bearer. He has sent all these knowing the distress of Gita Panda at this famine period. Keep all these materials and let me go back to my owner's house. Remember, let him

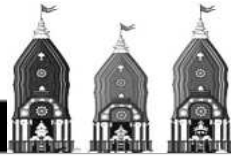
know that I came here. May he not forget me."

A common woman as she was, she could not understand the will of God. He could only guess that Balagopal was a common man. Without delay, she started shifting those materials from door to her house. She was amazed to see that materials could not be exhausted from the luggage despite her full attempt to transfer all. Gradually all the rooms became filled up with the wealth, valuables, jewels, food stuff, dress materials, ornaments and bore the sight of a royal palace. The bewildered woman could not understand the wonderful act of God. She could not feel the presence of God even though He was at hand.

She praised Gopal, "I wonder, that you have been able to carry such huge luggage at this tender age what I have never seen carried by anybody else before. Your body is so soft! Your shoulder must be aching and you would have been tired." She requested him to wait for some time and told, "Very soon I will cook so that you can have your meal and return back to your master. It would not be fair to let you go back without food."

Balagopal replied, "I am having a lot of burdens. The Pandas, there know me well and I heartily like their food. Now, I am unable to eat something as my tongue is bleeding and burning due to three scratches on it." With these words Balagopal went away.

The joy of Gita Panda's wife knew no bounds. Within a short time when food was



prepared, she woke her husband up from meditation and told excitedly, “Whatever you foresaw, has come true. Come and see. Our house has turned into a royal store .”

Gita Panda came out of the room of worship. He was surprised to see all the rooms filled up with the huge wealth and jewels. He could not believe his existence. He was speechless.

His wife explained the events in detail. A charming boy came to us with all these materials sent by your best friend who stayed near the temple. On my request to have food, He declined and expressed his unhappiness and inability to eat due to the three scratches on his tongue that was bleeding. That pretty Balagopal entreated you to have mercy on him and went back without taking anything.

After hearing all from his wife, Gita Panda could understand everything. Joyous tears rolled down his eyes. A feeling of spiritual exhilaration swept through his body. He experienced an exquisite image of Balagopal in his heart, with a divine vibration in Sahasrara (crown chakra).

Gita Panda enthusiastically told his wife that the pretty boy whom you saw was none but God himself. You are fortunate enough to witness God in your own eyes. It is also my good luck to see you. Recalling the last words of Balagopala regarding the injury, he blamed his wife for scratching the Bhagabat Gita which injured the tongue of his beloved God. Gita Panda felt restless for the injury. He urged upon his wife to go to Lord to have

darshan in the temple and beg apology for the sin.

Both Gita Panda and his wife proceeded towards Sri Mandira. Passing through the lion’s gate they reached at Jagamohan and gazed at their loving God. But what a dismal scene of the Lord ! They were surprised to see three blood lines on lotus lip of Lord Jagannath. He was trying to smile even with that gloomy face. Gita Panda could not resist himself and cried seeing the sorrowful condition of his Lord. Repentance in the form of tears came down the eyes and moistened the floor of the temple.

Gita Panda prayed before the Lord and begged apology for the immoral act. His wife as culprit begged pardon again and again before the limitless ocean of forgiveness.

They returned back home spending a lot of time in Sri Mandira. Thereafter they led a pious life, most of the time in reciting the Gita and chanting the glory of Lord Jagannath. At the end of their lives they attained Kaibalya Mukti at the supreme abode of Lord Jagannath.

The all merciful and compassionate Lord wants nothing from us. He is always ready to deliver his devotees from all distress only in exchange for true love and devotion.

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ShreeMandir Uttar Dwar (Elephant Gate)



ShreeMandir Dakshina Dwar (Horse Gate)



Shree Gundicha Temple, Puri

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