

Miracles in the Life of Sri Jayadeva

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Jagatguru Shri Sankarcharya has narrated Lord Jagannath of Puri Dham as "*Kalinditata Bipina Sangitkabaro*." Jayadev is the first poet who mentioned Lord Jagannath as Radha and Krishna who are mingled together. He is the poet who eulogized Lord Jagannath, the God who is the

same who undertook Dasabatar. Dasabatar is a part of immortal Sri Gitagobinda. The miraculous incidents relating to life history of Sri

Jayadev and his wife Padmabati who dedicated themselves to the heart of Lord Jagannath of Puri Dham, go to prove that there was no difference between Lord Sri Jagannath, Sri Jayadeva and Padmabati.

Jayadeva was one of the best writers on Sanskrit musical verses and known as such throughout India and abroad by writing of Sri Gitagobinda. The musical charm in composition remain unique to its type in Sanskrit literature and thus has perennial appeal to the audience. His poetic genius was highly appreciated, his Gitagovinda was translated into English by Sir

William Jones and then to German, French and other European languages, which made the acceptance of Gitagovinda as one of the masterpieces even in world literature.

Sri Jayadeva was famous in Orissa, especially at Puri Dham for his composition of

Gitagovinda. His father's name was Bhojadeva and his mother's name was Radha Devi. His wife's name was Padmabati. His birth place was a known

village, namely Kendubilwa, a few miles away from Puri. He was the sole devotee to Lord Sri Krishna or Lord Jagannath of Puri Dham, Orissa.

Devasharma, a Brahmin devotee of Lord Jagannath, was also living in Kendubilwa. He was childless who prayed Lord to grant one child so that he will offer the same to Lord. A daughter was born. He offered her to Lord. But Lord told him in dream and to priests of Lord Jagannath to offer her to Jayadeva who was a saint poet, engaged in meditation and living a sacred life. She was Padmabati by name. Accordingly, the marriage was performed through the intervention



of Lord Jagannath. Both wife and husband were devoted to Lord and had a religious life.

He composed Gitagovinda and sang the same with his wife before Lord Jagannath and danced while singing losing worldly consciousness. It deals with divine play of Sri Krishna with Radha and their conversation while playing both in spring being affected by cupid. While composing the Gitagovinda one line of conversation of Sri Krishna to Radha could not be filled up with appropriate words. He went for bath keeping his pen and book. While away for bath, Lord came in his form and wrote the incomplete verse "Smar-garala-Khandanam, mama sirasi mandanam dehi pada-pallava mudaram" (10th canto of Gitagovinda) "Sri Krishna was approaching Radha to be gracious to remove the poison of separation by placing her feet liberally like a lotus on his head." Not only Lord filled up the appropriate words, but took meal in guise of Jayadeva, being served by Padmabati.

Being irritated by envy, listening to the popularity of Gitagovinda of Jayadev, Maharaja (Gajapati) king composed one poem himself with the same theme and music and asked the singers to sing it in the temple and asked not to allow Jayadev's Gitagovinda to be sung in temple. But still through grace of Lord, Jayadev sung Gitagovinda while dancing in devotion in that temple. When asked by Maharaja, why he did not sing the song composed by the king, he replied that Lord considered his Gitagobinda as superior. To test this, both the composition of Maharaja and Jayadev were kept in front of Lord, the door of the temple was closed and all vacated the temple. A few minutes later, when door was opened, it was seen that Gitagovinda was placed above Maharaja's composition. The test of

superiority of Gitagovinda was cleared up by Lord Jagannath himself.

Another miracle can be mentioned here. An old lady, a seller of Bruntap-fruit (sweet fruit grown in thorny trees) went to jungle filled with thorny Bruntap trees, and while collecting fruits, sang devotional Gitagovinda in melodious voice and whole-hearted devotion. It was a moonlit autumn night. Lord Sri Krishna was enchanted, left his seat and followed her. His dresses were torn into pieces coming in contact with thorns. The priests in the morning could find night dresses of the Lord torn though temple of Lord Jagannath was closed. In dream, the priests and Maharaja could know the real incident of Lord Jagannath in form of Sri Krishna following the old lady in the thorny jungle, lured by the devotional singing of Gitagovinda.

While Padmavati was in the palace of the Gajapati king, the queen out of joke told that Jayadev breathed his last while in meditation in the temple of Lord Jagannath. Hearing this news Padmabati also breathed her last, out of sorrow. King told Jayadev about the mischief of his queen. Jayadev never minded. He prayed to Lord and sang the appropriate line from Gita Govinda "Priye, Charusile, munch mayee mana manidanam" with help of musical instruments. This forming the part of the composition in the 10th canto of his lovely epic "Gitagovinda" refers to the story that when Lord was cupid-affected and felt the absence of Goddess, Lord was singing song to get the love of his consort lying affected by the separation of the king. Lord has wished to get a sight of her eyes in order to get the nectar like drips from the lips of the man's face besmeared with glistening light from white teeth. Hence, Lord was approaching the goddess saying "O my lovely darling of very gentle

behaviour, give up your fear uselessly arising in your heart. Now my mind is burnt by a sensation of cupid, give me a drink of honey dripping from your lotus like face and let my eyes become very much pleased at your sight. Padmabati got senses and got up and sang the song with Jayadev joining herself in chorus.

Sri Jayadev spent his last life at Banaras and left his mortal body.

There is another miracle witnessed at Banaras. Once, Jayadev felt weak due to his old age on the way going to Ganga after performing the call of nature and took rest on the way. The king requested him to avail a conveyance to go to Ganga at this old age, but he declined and pleaded that according to his ability he will proceed to Ganga and take bath. At night, Jayadev dreamed Ganga in the form of a lady who approached him saying that henceforth from the morning for all the time, I will reside in the well, used by Jayadev. The fact became true. Next day, Jayadev narrated the story and with Padmavati, the king and the queen went to the well to take bath. Jayadev worshipped Ganga. He while reciting the Mantras before taking bath found that the water of the well swelled up high, the colour of the water changed and became as transparent as white as milk. People were surprised at this and Jayadev's eyes became filled with tears of joy, worshipped the Ganga and took his bath. This is the devotion of the great Jayadev.

At Kashi (Banaras) when he was residing and moving alongwith the king of Kasi, at Manikarnikar Ghat on the bank of sacred Ganga, a lady was found following her dead husband's body. Jayadev remarked that this is not sign of a chaste lady, because a chaste lady can not bear the life for a moment on the death of her husband.

The king did not relish the words and made query whose wife is of this nature. Jayadev claimed that his wife Padmabati is like this. To test the veracity, the king sent a detective to observe the real fact. That messenger detective confided to Padmabati that her husband, the poet Jayadev was dead due to capsizing of the boat in the Ganga when he was making boat journey with king and got drowned in heavy current of the Ganga. On hearing the death news of her beloved husband Padmabati left her life out of severe sorrow due to separation. The queen of Kashiraj felt much. Jayadev, when knew the fact became unconscious. Jayadev, after gaining consciousness addressed the goddess of learning to be messenger to establish eternal love between them. Being appeased, goddess Saraswati went to Radha and Sri Krishna and told that both Sri Krishna and Radha are cupid affected. They require conjugation. She eulogized that chanting sacred name of Krishna can repeated to the ward off evil and to ensure sacred life. At this, Sri Krishna advised Saraswati to repeat the lines of Gitagovinda "Priye, Charusile" before Sri Radha as a messenger. Saraswati repeated this verse before Padmabati, who is recognised as Radha in another form incarnated. Then, Padmabati regained consciousness, got life, became reunited with Jayadev, the human incarnation of Lord Krishna (Jagannath) and both of them sang Gitagovinda while dancing in ecstasy before Lord and vanished from the world.

Thus, the miracle ridden life of the divine couple disappeared from human eyes at Kashi by having permanent union.

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The Philosophy of the Gitagovinda

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God is the Chidatma and the Absolute Consciousness, whose mysterious existence can be conceived at heart by the acquisition of *Brahmajnana* through *vedantic* meditation. *Brahmajnana* is the source of wisdom and consciousness. The *Mahayogi* knows, our inner feeling is the cosmic power or *Brahma* and is also the ultimate reality. He is also the protector of His creation, the *Dharma*. He is the stainless one, shining in peerless light and appearing in soul-bewitching wondrous form. He is known as *Govinda*. The collection of sweet and musical *slokas* dedicated to Him is the *Gitagovinda*.

The scripture *Gitagovinda* of Jayadeva centres around the conjoined love episode of *Radha* and *Krsna*. According to Shri Rama Krishna Paramahansa, "As a devotee cannot live without God, so also God cannot live without His devotee. The devotee becomes the sweetness and the God its enjoyer. The devotee becomes the lotus and God, the bee. It is also the God-head that has become all these in order to enjoy its own Bliss. That is the significance of the episode of *Radha* and *Krsna*". According to one school of *Vaisnava* religion, the supreme God Himself became *Radha* and *Krsna* to enjoy the bliss of mutual union.

At the beginning of the scripture of the *Gitagovinda*, it is described in the very first sloka

that due to all-pervading darkness in the dense forest caused by clouds, *Krsna*, the child, was afraid and so *Nanda* asked *Radha* to lead the kid home, but *Radha* on her way indulged in secret blissful union with *Madhava*, her beloved, in the groves on the bank of the river *Yamuna*.

Due to excess of *tama* (darkness), *jiva* forgets God and there is not the slightest trace of yearning in his heart for God-realisation. The creator is at a loss to observe this spiritual degeneration in His creation. Though a part and parcel of the Supreme Self, *Jiva* forgets his inner self coming under the shell of world-bewitching *maya* or illusion which envelops him in complete darkness. The *jiva* can dispel this darkness of ignorance by kindling at heart the spirit of *Radha*, the pleasing consort of *Madhava*, by spiritual discipline at the dictates of conscience and enjoy the bliss of communion with the Supreme Self on the bank of the river *Yamuna* at *Vrindavana*.

Devotion with dedication is the main weapon to cut all the fetters that bind the *Jiva* to worldliness. The sages of the past have recorded eight shackles which obstruct the way to the realisation of God.

*"Ghrna, sankha, bhayam, lajja, jugupsa cheti panchami,
Kulam silam cha manam cha astu pasah prakrtitah"*

(*Bhairava Yamala* quoted in *Yogi Guru* - P. 168)

The eight shackles are hatred, apprehensions, fear, shame, jugupsa, high caste, rank and fame. These are brutal by nature and bind the human soul.

"Aetairbadha pasuh prokto

Mukta etah sadasivah"

(*Bhairava Yamala quoted in Yogi Guru, P. 169*)

Knowledge based on spiritual consciousness is not achieved easily, but it is the outcome of God's grace to be obtained through yogic austerities. Attachment to false and transient objects of the world delude mankind life after life leading to ignorance.

*"Janmantara sata vasta mithya samsara vasana
Sa chirabhyasa yogena vina na ksayate kvachit"*

(*Muktikopanisad - 2 -15, quoted in Yogiguru, Page 169*)

Futile is the human birth without the awakening of spiritual consciousness. So in order to obtain divine knowledge based on spiritual standards, the mind has to be controlled first for diverting it away from the sensuous objects of the world by yogic austerities, discrimination and renunciation till it is completely annihilated. Detailed discussion about Radha, the Primal Power and beloved consort of Madhava, has been made in the *Lilatattva*. On developing a conscientious mind, the spirit of Radha shall blossom in the heart and this will lead to blissful union with Madhava, the Supreme Self.

This very first sloka embodies in it the whole of the essence of the Gitagovinda which has been gradually developed in latter cantos. *Visnu Puran* contains the following sloka.

*"Vasha sarvanivasascha visvani yasya lomesu,
Tasya deva Parambrahma Vasudeva iti ritah."*

(*Vishnu Puran, Pratham Ansa- 2nd chapter
quoted in Sabdakalpadruma P.307 Naga
Publications, Delhi 1987*)

It is Vasudeva, who is omnipresent and is the ultimate cause (*Mahakarana*) of the animate

and inanimate world. He is formless, beyond physical perception and incomprehensible by the senses whose omnipotence cannot be described in words. How can the formless Brahma be conceived of indulging in blissful romantic inter-communion? At the outset, the poet, in the third sloka of the Gitagovinda calls upon those who are desirous of hearing to taste the sweetness of the sportive, romantic and divine love. In other words, through the thrilling love episode of Radha and Krsna, the poet Jayadeva takes us stage by stage to the highest pitch of God consciousness and God realisation.

It is God Himself, who appears in the form of man. The Nitya is the indivisible Satchidananda, and the lila or play takes various forms, such as lila of God, the lila as man and the lila as the Universe. The nitya comes down to the universe in form of lila to teach mankind and to perpetuate the creation. In fact this lila is going on since the first day of creation and shall continue till its end. The Gitagovinda of Jayadeva tends to uplift the soul on the way to God realisation., stage by stage, by dispelling the darkness caused by maya or illusion through the medium of selfless, fascinating and heavenly love of Radha and Krisna. To picture the inner most feelings of love in a pleasing romantic and attractive manner touching the heart of one and all is not possible for an average man without any divine manifestation in him. That is why the commentators have placed Jayadeva as an incarnation of 'Jagannatha' or the second 'Vyasa-deva'.

After the 4th sloka, begins the heart-touching vivid melodious description of the ten incarnations (Dasavatara) based on the evolutionary process of the creation and development of the animal world. According to the *Srimad Bhagavata Gita*, when virtue subsides and vice prevails, God manifests Himself to establish righteousness. It is on this that the theory of Incarnations of God based.

MINA or Fish

At first the whole of the creation was full of water. Sages of the past say that the fish was the first aquatic developed creature created by God. Due to spark of *Chidatma* infused in it, it throbbed into life, and it is considered to be the Fish incarnation of God, who descended to earth to teach people and to preserve His creation. The Vedas were in danger. Assuming the Fish incarnation, He rescued the Vedas thereby setting forth an example for the jiva engrossed in maya due to accumulation of evil and immoral tendencies. The goal is to control the mind from the beginning and focus it on knowledge of Brahma, the ultimate Reality.

KURMA or Tortoise

The animal creation on its evolutionary process and development proceeded and there was the Tortoise Incarnation (*Kurma Avatara*) of God. It was the first animal of its kind, an amphibian, which could move about both in water and land. In course of gradual progress of the jiva on the spiritual path there is great rivalry between godly and brutal forces. In the midst of this the seed of devotion flung in the hearts of the devotees germinates and the jiva longs to taste the nectar of bliss. Through the insurmountable hurdles of life the jiva pines for bliss of God. The gods and demons churned the sea with the *Mandara* hill to obtain the nectar and God in shape of tortoise saved the earth by supporting it on His back as described in the Srimad Bhagavata.

VARAHA or Boar

The next incarnation is the Boar that is the *Varaha* incarnation of God which is very significant. The amphibian progresses to the stage of the mammal. Without cultivating purity of heart no aspirant can expect god-realisation. So the jiva should be purged of all impurities before aspiring for God's grace. Man should free himself from the clutches of 'Woman' and 'Gold' which

constitute maya and delude mankind. Due to the degenerating effect of the tama, man has forgotten his own self and moves far away from God. The Boar incarnation aims at reestablishing to pure nature and goads jiva to Godhead by removing the impurities of heart and thereby saving the world from destruction.

NARASINGHA or Man and Lion

By way of continuous development jiva assumes the joint form of man and animal which represents the Narasingha (man and lion) incarnation of God. Knowledge and wisdom downed in the man as a result of which evil forces were crushed down. But jiva cannot completely free himself from 'I'ness or 'My'ness and brutal tendencies in spite of its partial elevation on the spiritual path. Brahma or God consciousness should be enkindled at heart with iron determination. Consequently the demon *Hiranya Kasipu*, the personified raja, and tama is vanquished. Without vanquishing *raja* and *tama*, no one can progress in the field of spiritual discipline.

VAMANA or the Dwarf

The next incarnation is that of Vamana or Dwarf. After overcoming the brutal forces, jiva assumes the short-stature body of man known as Vamana Incarnation. On assuming a human body, he was influenced by sattva, raja and tama. *Sattva* always soars high in the spiritual plane and consequently there was development of human knowledge. This is the 5th step in the spiritual ladder. When God consciousness blossoms with the elevation of sattva, then raja and tama flee away. On gaining wisdom, jiva realises that in comparison with the vast creation he dwindles into insignificance. This humility and the spirit of surrender to the Creator infused in jiva a moral and spiritual force. In the Vamana incarnation, His two legs occupied the sky and the earth and the third leg pushed Bali the embodiment of raja and tama to the underground.

Lord Jagannatha is termed in the Puranas as 'Vamana'. The saints of the past say that on having the darsana of Lord Jagannatha in the chariot, man escapes the painful cycle of life and death.

"Rathe tu Vamana drstva punarjanma navidyate"

The Yogis compare the human body with a chariot. Just as the chariot has three parts, similarly the human body comprises mainly of three parts, namely 'Sahasrara (head) 'Anahata' (heart) and 'Muladhara (lower part). At the topmost portion of the chariot Lord Jagannatha exists. It is the heart of the devotee which is the playground or drawing room of God. At the *muladhara chakra* (chakra is the centre of force in the body) the lower tendencies like lust etc. are located. The moment Lord Jagannatha ascends the chariot as Vamana, there is an outburst of spontaneous devotional and unfathomable joy in the congregated mass which is carried away to a supernatural sphere. On hearing the devotional songs and the sankirtana, the evil tendencies leave the mind. Sattva, raja and tama are the cords pulling the chariot of the human body. The Yogis believe that if an aspirant can realise and see in Lord Jagannatha at the sahasrara chakra of his body, he shall not be born again in this world.

PARASURAMA

Though the jiva was influenced by the three *gunas*, namely; sattva, raja and tama, the faculty of sattva prompted him to cultivate love, brotherhood and this led for formation of human society. But in course of time the rajas and tamas re-establish their hold on jiva and men again indulged in sensual pleasures, attachment to worldly objects, envy, vices etc. going astray from the path of spiritual discipline. Most of the Ksatriyas who were the ruling chiefs of the country were despots and did not care for the welfare of the people. They practised all sorts of cruelties. They did not care for the counsel of the wise, the

sages and the saints. In order to save His creation from disaster God again incarnated Himself as Parasurama and after eliminating these Ksatriyas. He restored peace and order on the earth. Though man tries to achieve progress on the spiritual path stage by stage, he has to face repeated falls due to dominance of rajas and tamas. The incarnation of Parasurama signifies that one should cut asunder by the axe of conscience shackles that bind the human soul to worldly objects, and reestablish the domain of sattva.

RAMA

The incarnation of Rama shows the victory of virtue over vice by way of contrast between moral, spiritual and godly forces on one hand and rajasika, tamasika and asurika forces on the other. Due to the predominance of sattvika qualities, Ramarajya exhibited the highest standard of kingship, parental regard, brotherly affection, devotion to superiors, sages and Brahmins, selfless heavenly love, love for lower animals and heroism and valour to combat the evil forces. The way to God realisation was made clear, Ravana, the personification of rajas, tamas and all other asurika-forces was vanquished. The incarnation of God as Rama taught the world to control the mind, subdue the lower base physical tendencies and to concentrate upon truth, non-violence and spiritualisation which chisels into shape the marble of life.

BALARAMA or HALADHARA (Ploughman)

The next incarnation of God is Haladhara, the ploughman. This incarnation contains a significant message to the human society. The plough is the symbol of agriculture, the main source of subsistence of the human society. In other words men were taught the value of dignity of labour and to utilise the strength for improvement of agriculture and to direct the mind for spiritual pursuits. Agriculture was the first non-violent way of procuring food and earning a livelihood for man. Haladhara incarnation stood for this.

BUDDHA

Due to vedic complex mode of worship to God, the rigidity of the caste system and other superstitions prevalent in the society, people were subjected to great oppression and ill-treatment. Animal sacrifice in the yajna and many other cruelties were practised in the name of God. To eradicate this blemish from the human society, God incarnated Himself as Buddha and taught people the rare virtues of Truth and Non-violence.

Jiva gains wisdom by maturity of knowledge. At this stage he begins to hate the earth polluted with envy and other vices. This leads an aspirant to the final stage of emancipation that is the merging of the soul with the Brahma, attaining Nirvana.

KALKI

On gaining wisdom, the liberated soul sees the Lord in samadhi and waits for being merged with Him when *Mahakala* (the death) destroys his physical frame. Mahakala signifies the Kalki incarnation of God.

Days gone by shall never come back again. Like a river flowing down to meet the sea, life moves in a fast pace to reach the last syllable of recorded time and meets death or Mahakala, the inevitable.

True wisdom blossoms in an aspirant in *nirvikalpa samadhi*. To him all appear to be manifestations of Brahma and this is what is known as *Brahma Jnana*. Everything in the physical world is unreal transitory and an illusion. The Advaita conception of Brahma is only real. According to the great yogi Nigamananda, this *Advaita* conception is termed as philosophy of life, *Paramatma* and *Bhagavana*. But, achievement of Advaita jnana is not possible for the average man. Bhagavan Sankaracharya, the founder of Advaita philosophy, Sadguru Nanak, Maharaj, Sumeru Das, Thakur Nigamananda, Ramakrsna Paramhansa etc. had realised Brahma in Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

The liberated soul shall enjoy the perpetual bliss in the kingdom of heaven and taste the nectar of His peerless beauty and lila.

After describing the ten incarnations, the liberated soul in communion with Brahma has gone mad with divine bliss and rapture " Srita kamala kucha mandala, dhrta kundala, kalita lalita vanamala.....etc."

At the end of the salutations to Brahma, begins the sportive eternal communion with *Satchidananda*. This is transformed to Radha-Krsna lila, the love episode of Radha and Krsna which is otherwise indescribable.

In the heart of the aspirant, on eight thousand petalled lotus, Brahma in form of Madhava or Purusottam indulges in everlasting blissful union with *Prakrti* (nature) *Para Sakti* or the primal power. On realisation of His existence, the soul can easily escape maya or illusion of the world and merge with Brahma, the Supreme Self. This eight petalled lotus represents the eight sakhis of Radha participating in the sportive union at *Vrndavana*. The thousand petals of lotus symbolise the thousand Gopis and Srimati Radhika is Mahamaya or the the Primal Power.

These refer to the plane of spiritual discipline. A lover of poetry may be fascinated by the art of love as represented in the melodious verses of the Gitagovinda. But for realisation of Hari in the self, a separate angle of vision is considered necessary.

The Theory of Incarnation :

Sri Ramakrsna says, "He who is Brahma is the *Adyasakti*, the Primal Energy. When inactive, he is Brahma, the Purusa. He is called Sakti, or Prakrti, when engaged in creation, preservation and destruction. These are two aspects of Reality - *Purusa* and *Prakrti*. He, who is Purusa is also the Prakrti. Both are embodiment of Bliss. Brahma or God is beyond sense perception and incomprehensible. He is

nirguna or formless. But He assumes form and becomes saguna for the sake of his devotee. This is the incarnation of God. For the sake of creation the saguna brahma incarnated Himself and assumed the trinity form of Brahma, Visnu and Mahesvar. There are manifestations of His power not only in Trimurti but also in different gods installed and worshipped. These incarnations were meant for assisting the aspirants to achieve progress on the spiritual path and to teach the soul to proceed step by step towards God-realisation. God is one but His names are many. Fire is one, but it assumes different forms and names at different places. Similarly, there are manifestations of God in different forms and names.

Govinda, who is the Mahakarana, cause of causes is also Satchidananda who is Purusa or the ultimate Reality that only existed before creation. Though He was the Creator and Chidatma, He would have been unaware of His existence but for *chitsakti*. The link between the creator and His creation is maya or illusion. This phenomenal world is created by His infinite power. By forces of maya, He has accepted the limits of time, action and the nature. This is what is known as the first stage of the creation.

After the first stage of the creation, the basic principles (elements) were created. Though God was the creator of all these principles (elements), there in conjunction with each other created by themselves men and other animals. This is known as the second stage of creation. This infinite power divided itself into ten components according to knowledge, will and action.

When every soul appears in the mother's womb, there is manifestation of godly power in the *Jivatma*. This is what is known as the third stage of creation.

Gunavatara :

Sattva, raja and tama are known as *Gunavataras* of God. In the first stage of the

creation these exist as the cause, in the second stage as the perception and in the third stage as the mind, intellect and ego. Again, these gunas are also known as Brahma, Visnu and Mahesvara. He who creates the world by conjoining Purusa and Prakrti is known as Brahma. He who under the spell of maya lends body consciousness to the Jivatma and goals it on the path of God-realisation is known as Visnu. Again, he who transforms or even destroys this universe according to need is known as Siva. But they are only partial manifestations of that one and only Infinite power. The prayers and worship which people offer to these gods, ultimately reach Him.

Every soul of the animal world is a part and parcel of the Brahma, the Supreme One. So every living animal, man and woman is the manifestation of God. The Purusavatara and Gunavatara are needed for preserving the creation. But sometimes for specific missions God appears on the earth through incarnations. When virtue subsides and vice prevails, God appears on earth to establish righteousness and protects the creation from the demonic forces. This is known as *Naimitika Avatar*. The *Yugavatara*, *Manvantara Avatara*, *Avesavatara*, *Lilavatara* and *Jnanavatara* are included in it.

Yugavatara :

When raja and tama gunas predominate in human mind, man is subjected to evil forces and goes astray. As a result, the creation tends towards destruction. At this crucial time, through the infinite grace of God, the sattva guna is enkindled in the human mind which grows stronger and stronger and by this the creation is saved from destruction. This is known as the *Yugavatara* of God. The ten incarnations of God as depicted in the *Gita Govinda* by Sri Jayadeva are considered *Yugavataras* of God. Of these ten incarnations, four assume the shape of the lower animals. But, on analysis, it will be seen

that they contain great significance in the evolutionary process of animal development as well as a medium to impart spiritual momentum by eradicating lower base tendencies.

Manvantara Avatara :

The holy saints and sages are manifestation of godly power who came down to the earth with a mission to teach humanity the gospels of truth, non violence and spiritualism by kindling sattvik quality in soul and developing it for the sake of God-realisation. They are known as Manvantara Avataras of God. Sages like Kaundilya, Rsabha, Dhruva, Prahlada, Vyasa, Gautama etc. belong to this class.

Avesavatara :

For specific purposes there is migration of godly power in soul. This is known as Avesavatara.

Lilavatara :

The creator out of his love for the creation assumes human forms with godly powers to sport in the universe as a man, to enjoy his lila and also to set up the religious and spiritual ideals for the human society. As this incarnation is the outcome of the divine will to indulge in lila, this is known as the Lilavatara. The playful activities of God are beyond sense perception. It is Srikrnsna who was the Lilavatara. There has been no second Lilavatara by now. Srikrnsna was the fullest manifestation of God's power. The Avatara (god who assumes the form of Avatara in different ages) himself came as Lilavatara.

Jnanavatara :

God incarnates himself in human form to develop in human society the sattva quality and to let the jiva to go on spiritual path. This is known as 'Jnanavatara. Mahavira, Buddha, Sankaracharya, Sri Chaitanya, Sadguru Bhagban Nanak, Mahatma Sumeru Das, Sivananda, Nigamananda, Brahmananda, Ramkrnsna, Sirdi Sai, Satyasai belong to this type of incarnation.

It is foolish on the part of an ordinary man to go for gauging the depth of power of God in the different incarnations which is beyond the conception of sages and saints.

The Chidatma and the Chitsakti are to observe and converse of the same coin that is the Absolute Reality or Brahma. When void of any action it is Brahma, and when engaged in creation, preservation and destruction by the help of the three gunas, sattva, raja and tama, it is the Adyasakti or primal power. Brahma is Purusa and his power is Prakrti. So Prakrti is the dynamic manifestation of Brahma in shape of the phenomenal creation with everything that belongs to it. At times, Brahma is conjunction with his primal power, the Adyasakti or yogamaya incarnations in dual form to save the creation from asurika forces. Such an incarnation was Radha - Krsna, essentially one incarnation but in two forms.

Srikrnsna is the Parama Purusa and Srimati Radhika, his loving consort is the Prakrti. She is termed as Para Prakrti. In Sanskrit as well as in Oriya, 'Para' means 'another' or 'other'. According to our scriptures the word 'Para' also refers to Srestha or Supreme Chief which is Purusa. So Prakrti is always at work to please Purusa. She has completely surrendered her heart and soul for the satisfaction of Purusa. But Purusa, though feigning indifference, is pleased at heart and charmed at the selfless love and restlessness of Prakrti to please Him. The whole creation is immersed in everlasting joy at this sweet selfless and blissful intercourse between the Purusa and Prakrti. Prakrti is always eager to execute the longing of her beloved in the phenomenal world for which she is very swift, agile and always on at her heels. Though enjoying the full bliss of being merged with Nirguna Purusa, she does not have the slightest trace of desire. She merges completely with Purusa. The whole creation is transformed to Vrndavana, the place of sportive union of Radha and Krsna. Prakrti goes into samadhi while in communion with Purusa. The

playful and loving activities of Prakrti move her beloved counterpart Purusa who is overwhelmed with intensity of divine love and forgetting his consciousness entreats Radha, the Prakrti, with the expression "Dehi pada pallavamudaram".

At the advent of spring, Prakrti in form of nature throbs with new life and inspires the whole creation. She has assumed this inspiring form for the pleasure and happiness of Purusa. In the words of the poet Prakrti is "Rtunam Kusumakarah". Having adorned the bosom of the blue-coloured Lord with all that is best and pleasing, the every playful Prakrti merges herself with Purusa and it is this blissful conjoined union of Purusa and Prakrti which has been transformed into the heavenly inter-communion of Radha and Madhava. The Vasanta Lila as described in the Gitagovinda is only a spark of the eternal lila of Radha and Madhava going on infinitely. On the infinite powers of God the main three are : 1 . Maya, 2. Svarupa, 3. Tatastha. By his Mayasakti God has created the world, Svarupa Sakti is that with which he rests in the eternal lila and by his 'tatastha' power the universe is regulated and governed.

The Svarupa Sakti again can be divided into three composites i.e. sat, chit and ananda. The term 'sat' means real and existing for ever, meaning, he who always exists. The entire world is His manifestation. God being the ultimate source of power lends a spark to others and creates them. This is what is known as sandhini power of God. 'chit' means intellect knowledge, wisdom and consciousness. From the continuous flow of his wisdom or consciousness, a particle of consciousness has come down to this world making it aware of itself conscious. He is the Supreme of all consciousness. He makes others conscious by His own power. This is known as sambit power of God. Lastly God is ananda or bliss incarnate. Ananda means joy, delight and bliss. All bliss owe their origin to God. The animate world feels pleasure or Ananda only through His

grace. The power with which He delights others, is known as the alhadini sakti or the pleasing power. As the soul is in constant communion with God, he feels the pleasure and there lurks in his mind a thirst for enjoying the bliss of life. But due to spell of maya or illusion, he forgets. It is God who feels the pleasure and pain in the creation in form of man. By reaching Brahma, the embodiment of permanent bliss the thirst of soul for real joy and happiness is quenched. So the Upanisads say "Rasovaisati, rasam habyam labdhanti bhavati" . In other words soul enjoys the fullness of heavenly joy by obtaining the grace of God, the source of permanent bliss.

Every jiva or soul pines for testing the pleasures of life. But to taste the bliss of life, one should intensify his feelings for divine love of God. When the feelings for love of God are intensified this is known as bhava. Unless bhava is awakened at heart, it is not possible to realise God and His bliss. The permanent joy and happiness which one derives by communion with God is termed as nectar and is far above the so called happiness and material comforts of the material world. When bhava grows intense it turns into mahabhava which links the self with the Supreme Self of God. We cannot hope for the grace of God for ensuring the fulfilment of our worldly desires. But on the other hand we should be prepared to sacrifice all we have in a selfless spirit to gain Him. Love of God should be cultivated at heart for the sake of God and not for any ulterior motive. The great poet Jayadeva has mentioned in the Gitagovinda :

" Hariravimani rajaniridani miyamapijativiram
Kurumamavachanam sattvara rachanam
purayasri hmadhuripukamam"

(Gitagovinda -11-7)

It is Krsna who is Madhuripu. His will is the only truth. The jiva or soul should exert himself heart and soul to fit into His divine will. One who is deeply engrossed in the material comforts of

the world can hardly think of God. So the jiva or soul should proceed cautiously on the path of spiritual discipline, and sing and hear the glorious lila or activities of God with a purified heart free from worldliness and then obtain His grace.

Love is supernatural and God is love incarnate and the only source of Divine joy. This world has been designed by God, as a universal school of Love. Love is divinely bestowed upon man. Out of ignorance the jiva or soul cannot realise that feelings of Love are the gifts of God which lead him to the kingdom of heaven. Love is the essence of His creation. The Lord or Purusottama appears as the universe with the nectar of divine love and his loving manifestation in every object of this phenomenal world turns it to a paradise.

God exists both within and without the animate world. The primary stage of Divine Love is bhakti or intensive yearning and restlessness for God which ultimately leads the jiva to the bosom of God. By His will this universe is ocean of love. This instinct of Love which God has bestowed on his creation, should be fully utilised by the jiva to reach the summit of God-realisation and enjoy perpetual Love. The aspirant who is mad for this Divine Love shall consider the material world as vile dust polluted with the most disagreeable stuff. In order to achieve the God in himself one should practise Karmayoga, Jnanayoga and Bhaktiyoga. For this, many saints and sages in the past had to undergo most severe yogic penance and austerities to be blessed with Love of God. It is a pity that some others do not have the rudimentary conception of God and the Divine Love. They equate love with carnal desire. God has created this world for His lila. As long as there is the creation this continuous flow of Divine Love will enliven the heart of every living being wherein the seed of love shall germinate.

Unless the desires of the mind are completely annihilated, love of God can never be

acquired. Spiritual austerity is the only way to put a stop to the desires of the mind. Desirelessness leads to acquisition of Love of God which in course of time is transformed to mahabhava that merges the soul with the Supreme Self or Brahma. The Gopis had gained this desirelessness of mind through varied modes of spiritual discipline and penance as a result of which they were blessed with co-union with God. It is very difficult to discriminate between one's desire and the will of God without purification of heart. Many believe their own desires to be those of the Lord which only exposes their foolishness. One can hope to realise the will of God if he reaches the level of the Gopis in the plane of selfless love for God and to enjoy the bliss of Gods' grace even without any spiritual penance. This is the real samadhi which is possible only due to passionate and intense love for God.

The Rasalila of God marks the climax of Divine Love. It is this love which has been transformed to ananda or eternal bliss. To love God and His creation is what is known as prema or Divine Love. Attachment to sensual objects of this material world is Kama or lust whereas attachment to God is termed as Love. Kama or lust leads the jiva to darkness of ignorance whereas love for God shines out like the sun dispelling darkness. In the Rasalila of vrndavana, lust or carnal delight was controlled and diverted to blissful eternal love of God. In the scriptures Madana is considered to be the god of Love. As he originates from mind, he is known as Manasija. Mind is always fickle which sways between real and unreal tendencies. In the ordinary sense kama or lust that is physical intercourse and real love as some say cannot be conceived separately in this world. Instead of curbing Madana, the god of Love, his blessings are to be invoked for diverting the lust towards inter-communion with God to attain perfection in life. It is Rasalila itself which is Love incarnate free from any sexual tendency. This represents the very soul of the Bhagavata and the Vedanta.

The essence and the principles underlying the conception of Radha and Krsna should be studied first before coming to the lila itself. In order to understand and assimilate the lila of Radha and Krsna as described in the Gitagovinda, one should first try to conceive at heart the philosophy of life in the context of self and the supreme self and the connective link in between. It is difficult to follow the importance of the lila without a purified heart. So this is known as Achintya Bhedabheda.

Srikrna who is omnipotent and omnipresent is the sole guide of this creation. His peerless blue-coloured body resembling the black clouds embodies numberless stars and planets which are governed by His direction. Can any body expect to conceive Him or win Him who is so powerful? Yes, He can be conceived and won over only by love or selfless and passionate yearning for Him. Unlike the sages who underwent great spiritual penance and physical privations, a devotee can attract Him by virtue of intensity of bhava or mahabhava termed as prema, the highest spiritual stage. Srimati Radhika, the primal power or the Adyasakti is the most perfect illustration of such selfless intense love for her beloved Srikrna. Brahma is nirguna and formless. But he has the longing to taste his own bliss, through this creation which is known as love. He incarnates himself in the world to enjoy the love and devotion of his devotees. Prakrti in form of Srimati Radhika is able to quench his thirst for infinite and selfless love.

On reaching the highest stage of knowledge one enters into the kingdom of bhakti which intensifies to bhava, the inner feelings of the heart. Every atom of the creation is changed with love of God. A spark of consciousness descends from God which constitutes the soul. The formless God is to be meditated in the Lotus of the heart of a devotee with intensified feelings of bhava. It is difficult for the average man to conceive at heart the formless God without a concrete shape to meditate upon which serves as a medium and this

leads to image worship of God. In the process of spiritual meditation, an aspirant has to proceed from the gross to the subtle by the help of an image of God in a form according to his own fancy and liking.

Without this, meditation becomes very difficult. This is the basis of Idol or Image worship adopted by the Hindus. The Gopis belong to the kingdom of Love who won the Love of God through passionate yearning and restlessness and Srimati Radhika was the central figure among them and also the most glorifying illustration of this sort of love for God. By entertaining at heart the image and spirit of Srimati Radhika, the aspirant can achieve success and realise God.

In the Upanisads the Bliss of God is considered to be the Brahma Itself. The universe owes its creation and destruction to fulfillment of this bliss of God. It is this bliss of God or Brahma which was incarnated as Nandanandana (son of Nanda) Srikrna. The most arduous penance made by the sages in the dense forest culminated in the Vrndavana Lila of God. The yogis and the sages eagerly waiting for ages together for their union with that heavenly form of peerless beauty, plunged at last in the ocean of Nitya Lila at Vrndavan and obtained blissful contentment by testing the nectar thereof. The sakti which creates this Nitya Lila of God is his pleasing counterpart known as Alhadini Sakti or Srimati Radhika. One has to shelter himself under a true preceptor without which it is not possible to obtain the grace of Srimati Radhika, the blissful power and the embodiment of mahabhava, the most intensified form of Bhakti.

The jiva cannot taste the divine love of Vrndavana Lila without enkindling at heart the spirit of Radha. This intense love for God is possible only when the jiva is free from the worldly attachments. In the heart of the emancipated soul the formless Divine Love blossoms and it is

considered to be Vrndavana. The pleasing counterpart Srimati Radhika is the goddess of Vrndavana. The jiva eagers to obtain its spirit, runs after Srimati Radhika who is always on eternal quest for her beloved Madhava. There is blissful union of Radha and Madhava after pangs of separation. This process of hide and seek between the lover and the beloved shall continue as long as the creation exists.

To realise the God-consciousness it is necessary to purify the heart. For this the aspirant should surrender his heart and soul at the lotus feet of God. Purusa, the beloved of Prakrti is the object of love and devotion of an aspirant. The principle of Purusottama of Sri Aurovindo is based on this. After reaching the highest stage of spiritual enlightenment, the jiva merges with Brahma and becomes soham according to Advaita Philosophy. It is only by selfless love and intense yearning at heart that a deovtee can have realisation of God. One may enter to rigid and severe Yogic discipline and penance for obtaining grace of God, but it is easier to realise Him by virtue of pure and stainless love. A true devotee always thinks of God, weeps for him and his hairs stand at the end, the moment he utters or hears the name of God. By considering God to be his own, the aspirant feels a divine impulse in his heart and sees in it the reflection of blissful communion of jiva and Brahma. God resides in the heart of the devotee in the nitya Lila place which is Vrndavana. Entering into the kingdom of love and devotion the jiva shall merge into perpetual bliss and reach the climax of Divine love. Intense love for God is based on Bhava or innermost feelings of the heart which gains intensity and terms into mahabhava. Srimati Radhika was the personification of mahabhava. So the ultimate goal of a devotee is to cultivate and assimilate the spirit of Radha for the sake of achieving the God-head.

There is manifestation of the power of God in the minutest particles of the world and the animal world. That is why the whole creation appears

beautiful. An elastic mind with child like simplicity is required to appreciate and realise this heavenly beauty.

In the Kaliyuga, the path of Bhakti has been recommended by the sages as the easiest means to realise God. But this has been pictured in such a way that an average man cannot comprehend it. The human society has in course of the evolutionary process reached the present stage of its development. The mysterious secrets underlying the spiritual sphere shall be unfolded and people will realise their greatness in promoting religious development.

The heavenly saints of God in their mission to enlighten mankind on the spiritual path and to preach their gospels on the divinity of the creation appear in human society in shape of incarnations of God or holy preceptors to acquaint mankind with the mysterious and playful activities of the creation of God and enkindle the light of God in the heart of purified liberated soul thus fulfilling their mission. They do not aim at emancipation of their own souls by spiritual discipline, but their chief mission is to bring about a super-human transformation of the world. The power of the soul is to be rejuvenated and this awakening of the soul shall in communion with the supreme self be greatest achievement of a spiritual aspirant. This spiritual odour shall spread from the individual to the society taking refuge in the lotus feet of the Lord and the society shall be that of the Yogis or spiritual aspirants. Jayadeva was one of such heavenly saints with a mission. It was a different mission - not to preach and sermonise, but to teach and entertain. It was entertainment with a divine purpose of God-realization.

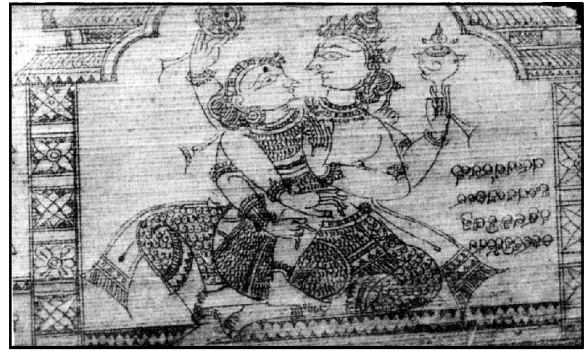
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Gitagovinda and Oriya Art Tradition

Nimai Charan Mohanty

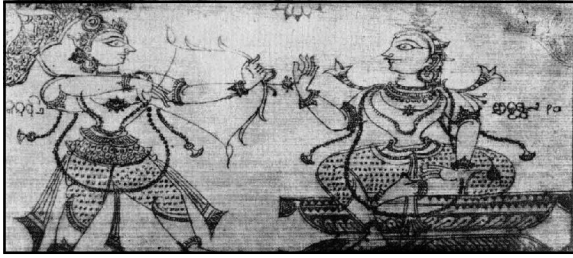
Orissa is very rich in artistic and poetic traditions. Gitagovinda Kavya of Jayadeva is a *superb* literary creation. It was known to have been composed in the 12th century A.D. The songs were originally meant for recitation in the Jagannath Temple of Puri. There are seventy two slokas. It has been divided into 24 songs in 12 chapters. Since its creation, the work has become very popular all over India.

The controversy about the age and birth place of Jayadeva has been extensively dealt with by many prominent scholars all over India. Most of them are of the opinion that Jayadeva was born in Orissa in the 12th century A.D. The village Kenduli on the Prachi valley in Khurda district has been identified as the birth place of Jayadeva. One set of Ganga copper plate inscription has been found in this village. A small inscription "*Jaya Jagadisa Hare*" on the lintel of *devi* temple ascribable to 12th century A.D. further strengthens



the historicity of Kenduli and its association with poet Jayadeva. A large number of archaeological relics found in and around this village also speak of the antiquity of the site. Various religions such as Vaisnavism, Saivism, Saktism, Jainism, Buddhism, Dasavatara and Gopinath cults etc. had great sway in the Prachi valley prior to 12th century A.D. The cultural revolution of the valley had great influence on Jayadeva.

For the popularity of Gitagovinda, we find many commentaries and imitations since the days of its composition. There is reference to Kenduvilva in ancient Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Oriya and Maithili literature. In the Jagannath Temple of Puri '*Gitagovinda-gana*' became a ritualistic tradition. The *dasavatara* prayer of this work had great impact in religious, social and artistic traditions of Orissa.



The sculptural representation of Dasavatara themes are found in the early temples of western Orissa and Chhatisgarh region. Mahasivagupta Balarjuna (750-807 AD) had built the famous Laxmanswar temple at Sirpur. On the lintel of this temple *dasavatara* figures are carved. At Saintala, we find representation of *dasavatara* in two Vishnu images.

At Gandharadi in Boudh district, Bhanja King Satrubhanja had built Siddheswara and Nilamadhava temples in one platform. We find some *dasavatara* figures in the Nila Madhav temple. Interestingly even in the Vaital temple of Bhubaneswar, few *dasavatara* figures have been carved out. Prachi valley is teeming with ancient Saiva and Madhava temples. In most of the later temples we find *dasavatara* panel. The cult of *dasavatara* and its sculptural representations in Orissa prior to Jayadeva had significantly influenced the concept of *avatara* depicted in Gitagovinda.

This work has produced new musical compositions in Kerala and Tamilnadu. From Gujrat to Assam and from Kerala to Kasmir, it has inspired a series of Commentaries. Painters have taken great inspiration from this work. We find specimen of paintings in Assam, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Gujrat. Its theatrical diction was also known to have been spread into Nepal and Manipur.

The palm leaf painting tradition of Orissa is replete with *Gitagovinda* theme. A series of such paintings are now available in Orissa State Museum. The linear rhythmic compositions of Radha and Krishna both in mono-chrome and bichrome are some of the marvellous specimens.

From the dawn of civilisation Orissa is famous for her paintings. The prehistoric paintings, engravings and line drawings found at Vikram Khol and Ulapgarh in Jharsuguda dist. Manikmunda and Usakothi in Sundergarh District, Gudahandi and Jogimath in Kalahandi district together with the Sitabinji historical paintings of Keonjhar district are the mines of our heritage. The accumulated art tradition reached its pinnacle in palmleaf paintings of Orissa. Flora, fauna and human figures have been flamboyantly executed with precision and sharpness. Figures of vivacious damsels with full bosoms and tender waists, in fact, beggar description.

Palm leaf manuscripts are generally called *pothis*. The manuscript that are illustrated are called *chitrapothis*. Such later *chitrapothis* contain text as well as paintings. A series of manuscripts are known to have been painted. But by far, the *Gitagovinda pothis* excell all other texts in lively illumination and its romantic themes have been copiously consigned to all media of Orissan Art idiom.

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The Story and History of Odissi Dance and Sri Geeta Govinda

Dr. Jasobanta Narayan Dhar

The tradition of Odissi dance is almost 2000 years old. It is gleaned from the past records that the first clear picture of Odissi dance was available in Manchapuri Gumpah of Udayagiri, which was carved at the time of King *Maha Megha Vahana Aira Kharvela*. Flanked by two queens, (Simhpatha Rani and Bajira Ghara Rani) King Kharavela himself was watching a dance recital where a damsel was performing dance in front of the court; there were several accompanists including female instrumentalists. Thus, the Odissi dance can be traced back to its origin as a secular dance, which was latter on very much attached to the temples.

Starting with the rituals of Sri Jagannath temple of Puri, Odissi dance was regularly performed in *Shaivite, Vaishnavite* and *Sakta* temples of Orissa. We have already got an inscription where it was also engraved that a *devadasi Karpursri's* attachment to a Buddhist monastery, where she herself, starting with her grandmother and mother, performed as devadasi. Thus, it may be inferred that this secular dance latter named as Odissi dance was first originated as a court dance and in due course of time became associated with Jaina monasteries as patronised and performed by royal presence, latter on also performed in all religious places including Buddhist monasteries.

It was said that one older temple existed at the same place reffered to as *neelachala* or Blue mountain, and Chodagangadeva constructed a temple at that place by renovating or moving the debris of dialapiated temple. The legends of Indradyumna and Galamadhava gave ample testimonies to this probability. However, existence of Lord Jagannath along with brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra was there as we have with us the famous hymn composed by *Adishankar* who visited this place in 9th/10th century and established his monastery at this place. In his famous hymn "Jagannathastaka", he has associated Lord Jagannath with Srikrishna and his first stanza was devoted to Srikrishna.

*"Kadachit Kalindi tata bipina
Sangitakabarau*

*mudavirih narii badana
kamalawadmahupa...*

This '*Asthaka*' or eight stanza was probably very much in use in the rituals of Srimandira which paved path for use of Sri Gitagovinda mahari dance in Srimandir of Lord jagannath.

According to *Madala Panji*, the temple chronicle, Gita Gobinda Seva was initiated by king Kabi Narasingha during his rule, corresponding

to 1278 AD as starting year and 1309 A.D. as the end of his rule. This Kavi Narahisnha of Ganga dynasty, literally translated, would be poet king Narsingha, who was actually Narsingha Deva of Ganga dynasty. Geetagovinda was actually composed during his predecessor Ganga king Kamarnava.

King kamarnava ruled Orissa in between 1147 A.D. to 1156 AD during which Geetagobinda was composed by Kaviraj Jayadeva of Kenduli village near Puri and Bhubaneswar. As Geetagovinda was quick to get recognition among the learned scholars of coastal Orissa, it was analysed by another Orissan poet and scholar kavi Udayana Acharya. The name of this first supplement is known as "*Vaba Bibhabini*" (Analysis of feelings). At this point of time, it was known that king Raghava Deva was ruling over Orissa. His period was limited to 1156 A.D. to 1170 A.D. Therefore, it is inferred that then ruling Ganga kings and Orissan scholars were amused by the musical rendering and scholarly writing of Kaviraj Jayadev mingled with devotional subject matter, and thought it proper to offer to the lord Jagannath along with music and dance rituals.

As Jayadeva has himself revealed as "*Padmabati Charana Chakrovorty*" and also mentioned this friend Parasara and others (*Parasavedi Bandhu barge*) it can be told, probably he was the composer and with Padmavati, his wife, they were a dancing couple. Most probably Parasara, his friends and other accompanists were there to perform dance and music recital before lords in the temples and kings in the court, it needs further examination and documentation.

However, we have seen in between 1150 A.D. to 1300 A.D., within 150 years, Sri

Geetagobinda established itself as a devotional song suitable to be presented through music and dance in the daily rituals of Lord Sri Jagannath in Puri. As already told before that different hymns and stores were rendered before Lord at different time and Upasana mudras (Poses, postures and gestures) were used to be performed by Sevayats. In all probability "*Jagannathastaka*", a hymn composed by Adi Shankar was one of the hymns those were rendered before Lord Jagannath as we also found it to be most suitable hymn in Odisi dance or without odisi dance.

Dance as a ritual is present in all Hindu temples of India. There are ample evidence to prove that Jaina monks along with kings were also patronizing dance as rituals. It was also similar in case of Buddhist practices. The Devadasi or Mahari tradition, later known as dancing girl tradition of Hindu temple, was a pan-Indian phenomenon, although most of the scholars attribute this to be a South Indian Style. North-Indian temples were also patronizing this Devadasi tradition though due to Muslim invasion the tradition was discontinued.

Thus Sri Jayadeva's Geeta Govinda was rendered by Brahmin Sebayats and female Devadasis known as "*Bhitara Geyeni*" and "*Samprada*". Some Mahari performed dance near the inner threshold known as '*Kalahaat Dwara*'. This was going on without any interruption for 200 years. Performance of Geeta govinda and Mahari Dance influenced other temples to start such tradition. As we see in Orissa all the temples, shavite, Vaishnavite along with Shakta temples patronised this tradition which is documented in temples of Bhubaneswar, Kakatpur and Jajpur. One Sadhu Pradhana Jayadeva was also honoured at the Sri Lingaraj temple of Bhubaneswar.

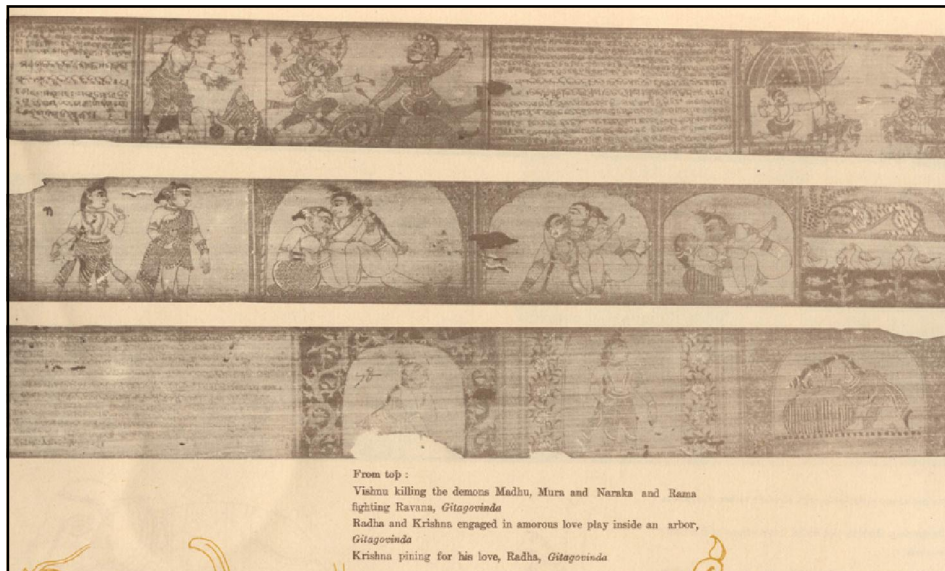
During this period, lot of learned scholars started writing imitating Sri Geeta govinda", which were by some research scholars were branded as "Counterfeits of Geeta Govinda". We may use the euphemism as imitations of Geeta Govinda. All these imitations vied with original one, but inspite of their masterly qualities failed to surpass kaviraja Sri Jayadeva's master piece. The writers of these imitations included no less than the Gajapati king who wrote Abhinaba Geeta govinda also. There from its enviable position of every day rendening before Lord Jagannath continues. To put to an end to this controversy king Prataprudra deva of Suryavamsa issued a proclamation engraved in Jay Bijoya Dwara that original Geeta govinda only will be recited during temple rituals in the rights.

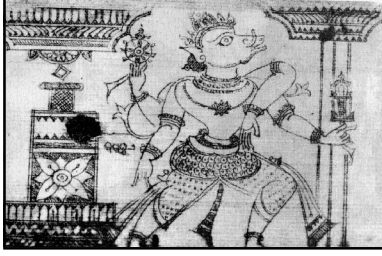
Thus Geeta govinda finds in eternal bond with the temple recital of music and dance. Till to day, Geeta govinda enjoys its coveted position

despite various other musical composition and innovative approaches.

It was a different story that the Odisi Dance, resurged out of the temples aided by Raya Ramananda, when he wanted to stage his drama "Jagannath Ballava" out side temple in Puri and invited the Devadasis to participate in it. This innovation also attracted objection and only after lot of royal support he could manage to get a temple girl called Mukta Devadasi to perform dance outside Sri Jagannath temple. Some opined that Raya Ramanda Managet got her from other temple. However, Sri Geeta Govinda remains to inspire.

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Jayadev - The Celebrated Saint Poet of Orissa

Indu Bhusan Kar

Jayadev, the celebrated saint poet of Orissa, wrote his *magnum opus*, Gitagovinda, a lyrical ballad unparalleled in Sanskrit literature. Written during 12th century A.D. this piece of art depicts the immortal love of Radha-Krishna.

These love-songs of Gitagovinda created sensational impact in the minds of the then people of eastern India and could change the cultural ethos in all walks of life.

As narrated by poets and Orientalists of Eastern India, Jayadev was born at the village Kendu Vilva, a Brahmin village situated in Adaspur Panchayat of Balipatna Block, a place 37 kilometers away from Bhubaneswar, the Capital City of Orissa.

Some of the eastern Commentators and scholars have written volumes on the creativity of Jayadev which was nurtured and nourished at the Prachi Valley at the famous village Kendu Vilva where Jayadev used to worship his Lord, Madhab.

Kabiraja Narayan Das wrote "Sarbanga Sundari" (in the 1307 A.D.), the Sanskrit script in which he has narrated that Jayadev the celebrated saint poet belongs to the village-Kendu Vilva. One Chandra Dutta of Mithila wrote a book on Jayadev Charita named as Bhakta Mala (in

1705 A.D.) in which he has mentioned Kenduvilva, a Brahmana-Sasan village near Jagannath Puri to be the birth place of Jayadeva. Nava Das a saint poet wrote Bhakti Mela in which Jayadev was shown to have been born in the said village in the district of Puri.

The epigraphic inscription - Prataparudra Abhilekha also indicates "Gitagovinda Seva" meaning that Jayadev's Gitagovinda was read and loved by the people of Orissa.

In the "History of Bengali Literature" written in Bengali language by Prof. Sukumar Sen the noted critic and writer of Bengal, Prof. Sen has opined that Jayadev belongs to Orissa. In the Oriental Dictionary there is mention of Jayadev belonging to Orissa. If any researcher reads the History of Sanskrit Literature written by Barada Chari, he would come across the views that Jayadev was born in Orissa and there he composed his famous devotional song Gitagovinda. Some of the devotees of Bhakti Cult expressed opinion in the book named Uttar Bharat Santha Parampara written in Hindi that Jayadev of Orissa wrote Gitagovinda.

Scholars like Prof. Barbara Miller and Prof. Thomas Donaldson have also opined that Jayadev belongs to Orissa.

If we analyse the pictorial description of nature as depicted in Gitagovinda we can well visualise that natural scenes of Gitagovinda resemble the geographical milieu of Orissa.

The erroneous opinion that Jayadev belonged to Bengal was created by one Banamali Das (1803) in his book *Jayadev Charita* and pointed out that he was the court poet of Laxman Sen. He just guessed and merely expressed opinion that Jaydev was born on the bank of Ajay river in the village Kenduli without giving any reason. In the Bengali etymological dictionary, the word Kenduli means festival. There is no such village named Kenduli and there is no epigraphical proof to substantiate this logic. This version of Banamali Das was supported emotionally by Prof. Suniti Chatterjee, the notable linguist of Bengal contrary to the opinion of literary historian Prof. Sukumar Sen. Thus this controversy started and rolled over. Thus, some section of people of Bengal fondly believed and propagated that Jayadev was born in the village Kenduli on the Bank of Ajay river in the district Birbhum. This is simply erroneous and historically and epigraphically holds no ground.

The regional propaganda in Bengali media and lately in Television serial "Saatwaa Rang" have created deep resentment among the art-loving people of Orissa who are great admirers of Jayadev - the illustrious saint poet of Orissa. Oriya people love Jayadev as they love their Lord Jagannath.

The Orissan folk art, drama, dance, sculpture and the Odissi music are greatly nurtured and flourished by lyricism and musicality of Gitagovinda.

There is also greater impact of these devotional songs of Gitagovinda on life and literature of Orissa. The lyrical poets of Orissa imbibed the spirit of devotional songs from the Gitagovinda.

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Depiction of Tangible and Intangible Elements of Nature in Gita Govinda Kavyam

Gadadhar Mahapatra

Gita Govinda Kavyam, a lyrical dance drama composed in simplified Sanskrit by celebrated poet Jayadeva of Orissa, in the twelfth century, is regarded as a unique phenomenon in the annals of world literature. It presents a consecrated account of divine love play in terms of human passion. Outwardly it describes the love, separation, longing and union of Radha and Krishna, the cosmic duo, in the mystical forest, *Vrindavan*, along the bank of river Yamuna. But metaphysically it connotes the yearning of the individual soul (*Jivatma*) for the mystique union with the divine soul (*parematma*).

The spiritual essence, mystical imports, sensual overtones, aesthetic depictions and lyrical fluidity of Gita Govinda have baffled critics, bewildered scholars, mystified saints, charmed lovers, enlightened devotees and have involved people at large emotionally and sentimentally.

It has, over centuries, influenced religious faith and beliefs, culture and traditions, literature and poetics, music and dance forms and has inspired creativity in the form of art, architecture, painting and sculpture.

Singing of Gita Govinda as a devotional song, before deities in temples and religious shrines has been traditionalized since centuries. It used to be the main topic for singing and dancing by

Devadasis in the Jagannath temple at Puri. All classical dance forms in India include some Astapadis of Gita Govinda in their repertoire for enactment and expression of sentiments (*Bhava*).

The dramaturgy and poetics in Gita Govinda have been skillfully crafted to touch the inner most core of heart and inspire noblest emotions.

One of the unique features of Gita Govinda Kavyam is the skillful depiction of the tangible and intangible elements of nature, as stimulants (*Uddipana bibhava*), in effecting change of emotions, sentiment and psyche of characters, in developing the theme. Jayadev has referred to about forty species of plants (trees, shrubs, herbs, climbers and aquatics) which produce colourful flowers, besides mountains, forests, animals, birds, reptiles, beetles, river, lake, sky, clouds, rainbow, lightening, sun, moon, stars, darkness etc. in describing the aesthetic landscape and as mood setters in expressing feelings.

Depiction of natural environment

In the introductory verse of Gita Govinda, Jayadeva has used the elements of nature as backdrop to initiate the drama and to indicate the form and content of the Kavyam.

*"Megheir meduram ambaram banabhuhah
Shyamah tamala drumeir*

*Naktam viruhu ayam tumeba tadimam Radhe !
gruham prapaya*

*It/mm Nanda nidesatab chalitayoh
Pratyaddhua kunja drumam*

*Radha Madhavayorjayanti Jamuna Kule
Rahah kelayah"*

[Nanda tells Oh Radha ! the sky is covered with smooth black clouds, the forest of Tamala trees presents a blue hue, it is dark, to which my cowardice son is afraid of. Please guide him to reach home. With this direction from Nanda, Radha guided Madhava and enroute preceded to quite bowers, amidst dense trees, at the bank of river Yamuna and in the loneliness, they sported in mystically ecstatic dalliance. Let their mystic dalliance be victorious.]

Smooth dark clouds, dense forest, quite bowers, river bank (cool breeze), lonely place, dark night, all these elements of nature are considered as stimulants of sensual feelings (*Sringar Rasa*), which sensitized Radha and Madhava to indulge in the sport of ecstatic dalliance.

Depictions of elements influencing emotions

In developing the theme, Jayadev has selected spring season as the time for enactment of the drama, when nature becomes vibrant with a fresh countenance, bedecked with blossoms of colours and gets loaded with nectarous essence, that emit a variety of fragrance, scent, perfume and aroma. Soothing wild sounds and pleasant movements pervade the air. These elements influences human emotions and trigger desire for enjoyment. The following verses of Gita Govinda are a few examples.

*"Lalita labariga lata parisilana komala
Malaya samire*

*Madhukara nikara karambita kokila kujita
kunja kutire*

Biharati Han riha sarasa basante

*Nrutyatiyubatijanena samam sakhi
birahijanasya durante"*

[The cool southerly mountain breeze softly embraces the pleasant vines of Labanga lata (*Quamoclit* spp.) and carries its aroma to all beings. In the creeper huts, hum the honeybees and cry the cuckoos, filling the forest with melodious sound. In this spring season, when the blooms and fragrance of flowers arouse the senses in all beings, Han dances with the young women and sports with them. It is a cruel time for those staying away from the loved ones.]

The description of cool breeze embracing vines, symbolically depict, embrace of *Nayaka* and *Nayika* and the melodious wild sounds and aroma as stimulants, which arouse erotic mood,

*"Mrugamada sourabha rabhasa basambada
naba dala mala tamale yubajana hrudaya
bidarana manasija nakharuchi kinsuka jale"*

[The fresh leaves of *Tamala* (*Garcenea* spp.) emit aroma, that fills the air, like the scent of deer musk. The red *Kinsuk* (Flame of the forest) with it spiked blossoms, tear at the young hearts, like the nails of *Manasija* (God of love).]

Red colour symbolically denotes the heat of mind (*kama*) and the aroma triggers the heat.

*"Madan Mahipati kanaka danda ruchi keshar
kusuma bikase Mi//ta si/imukha patali pata/a
kruta smara truna vilashe"*

[Madana (The god of love), rules this earth in spring season and like the golden rod of the decorative umbrella over his head, blooms *Keshara kusuma* (*Mesua ferrea*) with its saffron

flower pistils. The *Silimukha* (Black beetles) sit on the yellow *Patali* (Trumpet flowers - *sterospermum suaveolense*) to suck honey, which appear like the arrow heads in the quiver of *Smara* (God of love)]

"*Bigalita lazzita jagadabalokana taruna karuna kruta hase Birahi nikuntana kunta mukhakruti ketaki danturitashe*"

[Intense erotic mood has caused all beings to abandon skyness. Looking at their plight, the tender buds of trees bloom into laughter. *Ketaki* (Pandanous spp.) has spiked its blossom like spears, to wound the deserted lovers.]

"*Madhavika parimala Lalite naba malati jati sugandhau Munimanasampi mohanakarini taruna karana bandhau*"

[The strong scent of the flowers *Madhavi*, *Malati Jati* (Hiptage spp. and Jasmine spp.) etc. pervade the air, enchanting, even the meditating hermits (*Munis*), who feel again the passion of intimate bonds of youth, which they had abandoned.]

Jayadeva has gradually effected the change of colour and smell through the verses cited above. The red of *Kinsuka* (Flame of forest) has been replaced by the saffron of *Nagakeshar* (*Mesua ferrea*), dull yellow of *Patali* (*Sterospermum suaveolense*), bright yellow of *Ketaki* (Pandanous spp.) and finally by the white of *Madhavi*, *Malati*, *Jati* (Hiptage and Jasmine spp.). The aroma has been changed to perfume to fragrance to strong scent. Simultaneously he has indicated gradual transition of emotion from the red heat of *Kama* to brightness and peace of mind through pink, yellow and white.

"*Spuradati mukta lata pan rambhana mukulita pulakita chute Vrindavana bipina parisara parigata Yamunajala pute*"

[The mango tree has bloomed with pleasure, due to the firm embrace and entwining of the freely swinging and trembling vines of *Madhavi lata*. The forest areas of *Vrindavan* has been consecrated with the waters of *Yamuna*, where dances *Hari*].

Both sensuous and sacred aspects have been hinted here which have significant impact on human emotions and psyche. The embrace (*Panirambhana*) of creeper and tree symbolizes the unrestraint (*Mukta*) embrace of lovers (*Nayak and Nayika*) which result in blooming of pleasure (*Mukulita and pulakita*), a step in the path of achieving supreme bliss (*Paramananda*). The tremble or horripilation (romance) depicts the "Sattvik Bhava". This could be attained at a sacred (*Putra*) place like Vrindavana, where meanders river Yamuna, with holy waters, which are means for salvation.

Depiction of sensuality and mysticism

"*Dura vidalita malli balli chanchat paraga Prakatati pata baseir basayan kananani Iha hi dahati cheetah ketaki gandha bandhuh Prasara dasama bana prana bad gandha baha*"

The strongly scented pollen dust, emanating from the partly bloomed *Maui balli* (Jasmine spp.), permeate the air, filling the forest with fragrance. The cool mountain breeze (*gandha baha*), a friend of *Ketaki* scent and the soul of the arrow of *Kamadeva* (God of love), blows here and burns the minds of deserted lovers.

After highlighting the stimulant effects of colour and fragrance, in the verses cited above, Jayadeva touches upon the delicate pollen dust (*Paraga*), a stronger stimulant, which evokes the *Bibhavas* of *Bipralambha* Sringar (aspects of the agony of separation).

*"Unmilana madhu gandha lubdha madhupa
byadhuta chutankura Kridata kokila kakali
kalakalei rudgima karnajwara*

*niyante pathike katham kathamapi dhyana
badhana khyana prapta prana sama
samagama rasoullashei rami basara"*

[In spring time, with numerous plants in bloom, the smell of honey permeate the air, which attract wanton bees. With their frisky touch, in sucking honey, quiver and sway the mango inflorescences. The cuckoos crowd the trees, feast upon the tender buds and sing with joy in the melodious fifth note. The revelry of cuckoos, cause a fevered state, in the ears of the lonely travelers and arouse the sweet memory of their beloved ones. They spend the days, meditating upon the pleasure of intimate moments, they had enjoyed back home with their sweet hearts.]

This verse is highly loaded with sensuality and mysticism. When the springtime re-emerges after a long gap of one-year, the lowly creatures, bees and cuckoos, get the chance of union with their cherished subjects, the blossoms and buds, for whom they had awaited eagerly. They express the pleasure of union with hums and cries.

The lonely travelers represent the human souls, who long for union with the divinity. Their recollection of the memories of pleasure at the intimate moments of union with their beloved ones, represent, mystically, the divine bliss, the soul experiences, at the climaxing moments of meditation.

Depictions of aesthetic panorama

*"Adyotsanga basat bhujanga kabala kieshadi
besa chalam Praleya plabane chhayanusarati
shrikhanda sailanilah kin cha snigdha rasala*

*mauli mukula nyalokya harsodaya dunmilanti
kuhuh kuhuriti kalottalaha pikanam girah"*

[The southerly breeze, blowing from the sandal wood mountains, proceeds to Himalayas with the desire to bathe in the snow caps, to get rid of the pains of poison, emitted continuously to it, by the serpents, residing in the hollows of large sandal wood trees.

The cuckoos revel joyously at the appearance of delicate buds and blooms of inflorescence aver the head of mango trees.]

In this verse, Jayadeva presents a picture of the geographical landscape of India, from the mountainous peninsular region, rich in sandal wood forest, the Gangetic plains, rich in mango groves, to the snow capped Himalayan peaks in the north.

By referring to elements of nature like sandal wood mountains (cool scented breeze), snakes and suffering of pain (due to poison), snow (coolant), delicate buds of mango and reveling of cuckoos (onset of spring), Jayadev symbolically hints at the state of mind of separated souls in the mode of Bipralambha sringar.

*"Duralokab soka stoka stabaka naba
kashoka kalika bikashah kasaropabana
pabariopi byathayati
Api bhramyad bhrungi ranita ramaniya na
mukula
Prasuti schutanam sakhi sikharaniyam
sukhayati. "*

[With intense agony due to separation from Krishna, Radha tells Sakhi, that a simple glance at the Ashoka (Saraca indica) tree, takes away the pains of separation (Virahajwala). But now looking at its freshly bloomed flower bunches, only intensifies my pain, as does the cool breeze, blowing form the forests surrounding the lake.

The soothing hum of wanton bees, sucking honey from the blooms at the top of mango trees, gives me pleasure neither.]

It is Jayadev's unique way of presenting the state of mind of separated lovers referring to the elements of nature.

Depiction of agony of separation

"Abaso bipinayate priyasakhi malapi jalayate tapopi swasitena daba dahan jwala kalapayate sapi twad birahena hanta harini rupayate ha katham Kandarpopi yamayate bira chayancha sardula bikriditam"

[Due to separation from Krishna, Radha being emancipated and colourless behaves like a doe and considers her house as the jungle. The group of companions (sakhis) as trap nets (snare) preventing her from moving out. The burning pain of her body exhaled as sighs appear like the rage of forest fire. Her state of mind is like that of a timid frightened doe about to be killed. She considers Kandarpa (God of love) as Yama (Messenger of death), because, like a tiger attacking a helpless doe, cut off from all sides by trapnet and fire, Kandarpa sports with her mind and inflicts pain.]

Jayadev, in this verse, through elements of nature, describes the outer and inner state of Radha suffering from the agony of separation.

"Nindati chandana mindu kirana manu bindati kheda madhiram byala nllaya milanena garala miba kalayati malaya samiram sa biraheta dina Madhva ! manasija bisikha bhayadiba bhabanaya twayi lina"

[The soft sandal paste and the moon beams burn and scorch her. The touch of soft mountain breeze (Malaya Samira) blowing from the sandal wood

forest gives the feel of venom, of poisonous serpents. Fearing the arrows of *Manasija* (God of love), Radha meditates and clings to *Madhava*.]

Radha's state of mind, due to dissertation by Krishana, is presented here through the intangible elements of nature.

Depiction of beauty of woman's body (Radha)

"Bandhuka dyuti bandhava ayam adharh
snigdho madhuka chhabir

Gando schandi ! chakasti nila nandana shri
mochanam lochanam

Nasavyeti tila prasuna padabi
kundavadanti ! priye!

Praya stwan mukha sebaya vijayate biswam
sa puspayudha"

[Her moist lips are the crimson red of Vandhuka (autumn flower), her face has the fresh lustre of honey coloured Madhuka (*Madhuca latifolia*), her eyes are aglow like blue lotus (*Nila nandana - Nelumbo spp.*), her nose resembles sesame flower (*Tila prasuna*), her teeth gleam like the white jasmine (*Kunda*). Adorning her face with these flowers and worshipping her God of love (*Puspayudha*) has conquered this world.]

Jayadev presents here another word picture of colours. Every limb of Radha is an aspect of nature aglow, visions of coloured flowers and perfume of many hues.

Jayadev in several other verses of Gita Govinda has used simile of natural elements in describing the beauty and state of Radha. A few examples are cited below:

"Nilanalinava mapi tanwi ! taba lochanam
dharayati kokanada rupam."

[The blue lily-eyed beauty, who has turned like scarlet lotus with anger.]

"Sthala kamala ganjanam mama hrudaya ranjanam"

[The blossom of *Sthala kamala* (Earth lotus) is be-littled by the colour of the foot of *Radha* which colours my heart.

"Vilasha kusuma sukumar dehe"

[Revel oh Radha ! with your tender body like flowers.]

"Vasante vasanti kusuma sukumari abayabei Bhramanti kantare bahubihita krushnanu saranei"

[Radha with her delicate limbs, like the soft and fragrant Madhavi blossoms, wanders alone in the forest wilderness in search of Krishna.]

Gita Govinda kavyam comprise of 12 cantos, 24 Prabhandas (Astapadis) and 72 verses (slokas). Jayadev has referred to both tangible and intangible elements of nature in almost all descriptions, similes and alliterations. A brief indication only is given in this paper.

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Jayadev : the Poet of Orissa

Dr. K.C. Mishra

Gitagovinda, a unique and heightened lyric, modelled in the form of a pastoral drama is the magnum opus of Kavi Jayadev of Orissa. The work was composed sometime in the 12th century centering around Lord Krishna and His consort Radha and was dedicated to Lord Jagadisha or Lord Jagannath enshrined at Srikshetra, Puri.

The treatment of divine sensuous theme, the art of versification, the use of simple and mellifluous diction, grace and embellishment have made the Kavya an immortal creation of the poet. While venturing to treat the divine eros, the poet has spelt out his artistic purpose right in the beginning and has cautioned the readers not to treat it as a bawdy stuff.

The poet Jayadev has achieved both national and international acclaim for his unique style. The sanskrit text is available in various parts of India and outside India also. There were controversies till the mid-fifties of the present century about the nativity of the poet. A few scholars with utter disregard to local tradition and total indifference to historical perspectives have ascribed Jayadeva's nativity to different places of India. Even an attempt was made to define him as a native of West Bengal and a place in Birbhum District of West Bengal was identified as the birth place of Jayadev, which was strongly refuted by Dr. Sukumar Sen. Subsequent researches have proved that Jayadev was undoubtedly a poet of Orissa, who in his youth went to Sri Kurmapataka

for acquiring expertise in dance and music. He came back to his native village Kendubilva situated on the bank of the river Prachi in Puri district. There is still a living legend as to how he used to worship Madhava and used to go to Puri to have a *darsan* of Lord Jagannath frequently. Sri Kedarnath Mohapatra, Dr. S.N. Rajguru and others had made intensive researches on this aspect and advanced irrefutable arguments, which have not yet been challenged.

The first Commentary on Gitagovinda was authored by an Oriya scholar. In Orissa, hundreds of palm leaf manuscripts are still preserved unlike other States in India. Most of the palm leaf texts are illustrated by the native writers. Besides the Gitagovinda texts, more than fifty imitations are also found in India and quite a good number of them belong to Orissa. The theme Gitagovinda is profoundly reflected in *patta chitras*, wall paintings and decorative programmes of Vishnu temples in Orissa. The landscape described in the text refers to the rural landscape of Orissa. The Odissi dance which is the classical art form of Orissa has accepted Gitagovinda as its nucleus. The visual enactment of Gitagovinda through Odissi and Gotipua performances has already caught the attention of the critics of performing art. Among all the classical art forms in India, Odissi dance form has been adjudged as the most effective medium for conveying the message of Gitagovinda. In the

Palla performance of Orissa, Gitagovinda is very often recited. The elaborate panegyrics in the opening verses of Gitagovinda refer to the ten incarnations (*avataras*) of Lord Vishnu whose graphic sculptural representations are found on the outer walls of the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. It is pertinent to mention here that the present Jagannath Temple was built anew by Chodagangadev, hardly half a century before the advent of Jayadev who might have been inspired by the sculptural representations of the *Avataras* of Vishnu. So much popular was Gitagovinda in Orissa that in numerous Jagannath temples, there was the practice of reciting Gitagovinda. Some of the temples still bear a testimony to this tradition. The Inscription in the Jagannath Temple which dates back to 1499 A.D. displays a royal proclamation in favour of recitation and enactment of Gitagovinda before the Lord as a nocturnal ritual. Even all the temples of Prachi Valley have still kept up the tradition of the recital of Gitagovinda.

The Odissi music has complex *ragas* and *talas* which are mostly from the matrical compositions of Jayadev. The prescribed *ragas* and *talas* are hardly found in musical systems of other States.

The weavers, particularly of Jayadeva's native place Kenduli, customarily present *Khanduas* (i.e. shawl) to Lord Jagannath in which some verses of Gitagovinda are artistically woven. In the tie and die handloom fabrics of Sambalpur, the tradition of weaving Gitagovinda is still found.

The Orissa State Museum preserves seven leaves of proboscis, which contain Gitagovinda. Each leaf contains approximately 13 to 15 lines of the text which are incised in the sawn elephant trunk by stylus. Bamboo leaves, depicting the Gitagovinda text is also found in Orissa. Palm-leaves have been rolled into beads which contain the text of Gitagovinda. It is

interesting to note that Gitagovinda was so popular that even Muslim scribes in Orissa have copied down the text in the palm leaves.

Adjacent villages of Kenduli or Kendu Bilva are found bearing the names of ten *avataras* or incarnations of Lord Vishnu as reflected in Gitagovinda. This undoubtedly establishes the fact that the influence of Gitagovinda was enormous in Orissa.

Some scholars have found out that the Padmavati image in Kenduli temple was the presiding deity of Jayadev, because Jayadev himself mentions that he is *Padmavati-charan-charana Chakravarty* which means he is the king among the devotees to eulogise the sacred feet of Padmavati. Sudamuni Sarala Das of 15th century almost four hundred years after Jayadev, in his voluminous *Oriya Mahabharat* also sought the blessings of his presiding deity Sarala Chandi. It seems quite plausible that Jayadev might have sought the blessings of goddess Padmavati for divine inspiration to compose his Gitagovinda. The icon of Padmavati is said to be that of goddess Chandi. Of course some iconologists have tried to identify the image as either a Jaina deity or a Buddhist deity. According to another legend, Padmavati, the daughter of one Devasharma was the wife of Jayadev. She was a famous dancer of South India. Her name is found mentioned in an inscription at Guntur which is dated to 1150 A.D.

Vaishnav Leelamruta of Madhav Patnaik of the 16th century gives a detailed description of Srichaitanya and his followers as to how they used to undertake a pilgrimage in the month of *makara* and Jayadev's birth place Kenduli occupied an important place of visit in their itinerary. The controversy regarding the nativity of poet Jayadev was confined to the name of the village Kenduvilva and its variant corrupt form Kenduli. Kenduli on the prachi valley in Puri district can certainly be taken as the birth place of Kavi Jayadev of the Gitagovinda fame.

Other Works of Shri Jayadeva

Arun Kumar Upadhyay

I had a long standing assumption that Gitagovinda was not the only work of Shri Jayadeva, glory of medieval Orissa. This is a great work in itself, but there are several works of its kind in Orissa itself. The style of Jayadeva was adopted by famous Maithili poet Krishna Dutta, who had written *Chandika-Charita-Chandrika* recently published by Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Allahabad in its journal of 2005. In this book, the poet has mentioned in verse 1/12 that he is following the great poet Jayadeva.

Dashavatara Stotra

The first three verses of his *Dashavatara-stotra* indicate knowledge of vedas and cosmology. First verse is about fish-incarnation of Vishnu, which is permanent in space as well as a human incarnation at the time of glacial floods in 9533 BC as per Vishnu-Dharmottara Purana Chap.68, when *Prabhava Guru*-year started in both systems-*Surya-siddhanta* in north India and *Paitamaha-siddhanta* in south India. Next two verses can have only cosmological meaning. Kurma-incarnation is described *Ati-Vipulatara Prithivi*. Vipula means big; its comparative and superlative forms are *vipulatara* and *vipulatama*. Crossing the limit of vipulatama can be called *ati-vipulatara*. Use of both adjectives *ati* and *tara* seems unusual. But, it is understood

when we consider three earths described in vedas. Vipula (big) *prithivi* (earth) is our planet. Vipulatara is the solar system described in *Bhagavata purana, skandha 5*, as disc-shaped earth of 100 crore yojanas (about 800 crore kilometers), out of which the inner part of 50 crore yojanas is *loka* (lighted) and outer part is *aloka* (dark) part. Vipulatama *prithivi* is the galaxy which is largest and is the last limit at which sun can be seen as a point. These three earths are defined as the zones lighted by sun and moon, the zone lighted by sun is earth of solar system and the largest earth-galaxy is the limit of reach of sun-rays.

Ravi Chandramasauryawanman khairawa-bhastyate / sa samudra-suri - chhaila pruthivi tabati smruta / (Vishnu Purana)

The next verse tells that the ratio of three earths with their sky is the same as that of man and earth (planet).

Yabatpramanana prutivi vistara parimandalat / Navastawatpramanam wai byasa mandalatodwija // Manena tasya kurmasya kathayami prayatnatoh Sakoh satasahsrani yojonati vaputi sthitam /

(Narapatijayacharya, Kurma Chakra)

1000 parts of earth diameter is usually defined as yojana as earth is a 1000 petal lotus is

space (Padma-purana). It is 1 crore (10^7) times bigger than earth. Sky of earth is solar system which is again 10^7 times bigger. For solar system as earth, its sky-the galaxy is again 10^7 times bigger. Thus the galaxy is $1000 \times 10^7 \times 10^7 = 10^{17}$ yojanas. Size of Kurma is stated to be 10^{18} yojanas, i.e. 10 times bigger than galaxy.

On this Kurma back, galaxy of 1/10th size is rotating which is cause of creation, so this has been called Kurma, i.e. which does work. In modern astronomy, this is called neutrino-corona of galaxy. In *Brahma-vaivartta Purana, Prakriti-khanda*, chap.3, this is called *Golaoka* in which *Virata-balaka* (great child) galaxy is created. Now we can understand the meaning of Jayadeva's -

*Kshitirati vipulature tava tisthati prusthe /
Dharanidharanakina chakra garisthe / Kesava
dhrta kachhapa rupa, Jaya Jagadisha hare //*

Similarly, earth is a small dot on the mountain like the tooth of Varaha. Thus, this is not a small animal like a boar. Its tooth itself must be about 100 times bigger than earth and the Varaha must be bigger at least 1000 times. In *Vayu-purana* (6/12), it is stated that varaha is 100 yojana high from sun and its body is 10 yojana wide. Then earth must be within $100 + 10 = 110$ yojana from sun. It is about 108 or 109 sun-diameters away from sun depending on its position in elliptical orbit. Thus, yojana here means diameter of sun. Earth is then of 1/108 yojana size, i.e. varaha is 1100 times bigger. This is stated by Jayadeva as -

*Vasati dasana shikhare dharani taba lagana /
Shashini kalank kaleva nimagna / Keshava
dhrta shukara rupa, Jaya Jagadisha hare //*

Bhavishya - Purana - Pratisarga parva, part 4, chapter 9 of *Bhavishya purana* tells about

Dhanvantari, Sushruta and Jayadeva. Its previous chapter tells about *Madhva, Shridhara* etc and next chapter about *Krishna Chaitanya*. These are not in any chronological order and appears to be later addition to Bhavishya purana during British rule when Bengal was the centre of British India. Then Bengal included Orissa and Bihar, also ruled from Calcutta Presidency. So the Purana tells that Jayadeva was born in Kendubilva village of Banga. However, the story describes looting of Jayadeva in Dharmashala, which is now in Jajpur district of Orissa and his marriage in Jagannath-puri which was near to his village. Dharmashala was centre of Dacoits who looted pilgrims coming to Puri. King Dharmapala took action against them and named it Dharmashala (place of piousness). This Purana mentions Jayadeva mainly as *Nirukta-kara*. He took *sanyasa* after deep injuries by dacoits, who had made up a false story that Jayadeva was also committing dacoity in Bengal area. Thus, his place in Bengal is only a false plea of dacoits, nothing else. He studied from parents for 12 years after attaining age of 5, i.e. upto 17 years age. Then he performed their last rites and married Padmavati at the age of 23 years. Twice his nirukta has been mentioned -

*Bilwa grame Banga dese sambhavami
niruktakrut/ Jayadeva iti khyatah kavinam hi
shiromanah // gehe kandukino jato
brahmanasya mahitale / Nirukta vaidikam
changam krtavansa samadhina/ Varnagamo
gavendradau sinhe varna viparyayah/
Shodashadau vikarascha varnanasah
prusodareh// varnavikaranasavyam
dhatoratisayane yah/ Yogastadyuchyate
pragyenrmyura bhramara disu// Ebam pancha
vidhyanyevaniruktani vai/ Sudraischa
nagavamsiyervrashitani kalau yuge// Jatwa*

*prakrutabhasayah katrunmudhankalipriyan/
Shundhuhi paninih shastram chakara
surahetave//*

Jyotisha - His Dashavatara stotra itself indicates his knowledge of astronomy. Moreover nirukta needs complete understanding of Vedas which is impossible without astronomy. Another reason is that *Shatananda* had written *Bhasvati* in 1099 A.D. which is a *Karana* text of astronomy. It needs a basic theory of Algebra whose book must have been written by him or existing earlier than Jayadeva. His astronomy book is not available, but has been quoted in a book *Sundari* which is a commentary on *Laghu-Bhaskariya* of Bhaskara-I (629 A.D.). Manuscript of this work was seen in Maharaja Palace Library, Trivandrum. His method of *Chakravala* was described by

Prof. Kripa Shankar Shukla in his article-Acharya Jayadeva, the Mathematician (*Ganita*, Vol.5, No.1, June, 1954). This Jayadeva has been stated of 11th century. His original book or quotation in Kerala text might have given his exact date of birth. Jayadeva methods are described at pages 97, and at 107-109 of the book-Bharatiya Ganitam-published by Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, Tirupati - 517507 in December, 2005. Author is Prof. Venkatesha Murthy.

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Sri Jayadeva and Gita Govinda

Dr. C. B. Patel

Verily, Jayadeva was the last of the ancients and the first of the moderns of the Indo-Aryan literature. His rare poetic creation Shree Gitagovinda is a kavya of world eminence. He flourished in the 2nd half of 12th Century A.D. during the regime of the Ganga Rulers of Orissa. On the basis of discovery of a copper plate grant at Kenduli Village i.e. ancient Kendu Vilva it has been conclusively proved that Jayadeva was born in Orissa at Kenduli Village on the bank of ancient Prachi valley. His ancestry and life history is shrouded in mystery. His name comes at the last among the series of classic poets of Sanskrit like Harshadeva, Bharavi, Bhagabati, Somadeva, Bilhana and Sriharsha. Through his single work the Gitagovinda he became comparable to great poet Kalidasa. He has articulated the erotic love of Krishna and Radha in sublimated idiom giving a mystic and spiritual aura. His Gitagovinda obtained the status of a religious work as he was a saint poet devoted to Vaisnavism. His name and fame as much his work has come down to all sections of the people right from 12th Century A.D. Stories about him have become the part of devotional romance which has exalted the life of common man.

In the legends of medieval Vaisnavism, there is legendary accounts of Jayadeva. Some

of them do not have historical connotation. One Jayadeva has been depicted as a great Vaisnava saint prior to Guru Nanak by the Shikhs. This indicates that Shikhs have accepted Jayadeva as a Vaisnava saint of eminence. There are several other authors named Jayadeva in various Sanskrit literature. Excepting the Poet of the Gitagovinda nothing more is known about other Jayadevas. We find one Jayadeva who has authored a series of aphorisms on metrics.

The opening verse of the Gitagovinda is exhilarating and enchanting. The composition of words is unique:

*“meghair meduram ambaram, vana-bhuvassyamam
tamala-drumair:*

*naktam; bhirur ayam, tvam eva tad imam, Radhe !
grham prapaya;”*

*ittham Nanda-nidesatas calitayoh pratyadhva-
kunjadrumam,*

*Radha-Madhavyor jayanti Yamuna-kule rahah-
kelayah.”*

Because of the lucid style of composition, Shree Jayadeva has earned a niche in the heart of all.

As is gleaned historical Jayadeva was infact a secular poet of love and romanticism while

Jayadeva the saint and mystic poet of love was a devotee of Krishna. This dual character of the poet is reflected in the various verses of Geeta Govinda. The 26 verses of Jayadeva which is quoted in the *Sadukti-Karnamrita* are indicative of the wide range of his poetic interest and achievement which were confined to both love and eroticism. There is an undercurrent of Vaisnav faith and devotion in his articulation. Literary flavour is predominant in his work in the diction of *Sringara* i.e. *love and love play*.

His fame spread over the whole of India rapidly during his life time because of the lucidity of the composition. His work satisfied the literary men both in Sanskrit and vernacular language. Legend and romance are the old Hindu renaissance through Bhakti Movement. This was presented in enchanting manner in the Geeta Govinda. For this in a short span of one hundred years of its existence we find a verse being quoted as a benedictory invocation in an inscription in distance Gujarat in Patan dated to 1292 A.D. The early Gujrati poem the Basanta Vilasa composed about 1450 A.D. has echoes of the Geeta Govinda. Some 40 commentaries of the Geeta Govinda have been enumerated by Dr. H. K. Mukherjee in his comprehensive study of the Geeta Govinda. One of the earliest of these is the *rasika priya* by Rana Kumbha of Mewar which is a very learned work. Thus the Geeta Govinda was one of the most commented works of Sanskrit literature. The commentators belong to different regions of India. There were a number of middle Bengali and middle Oriya translation of Geeta Govinda. We know from the inscription in the Jagannatha Temple at Puri dated 1499 A.D. which has been written by the orders of King Pratap Rudra Deva that from the said date the songs and poems of the Gita Govinda were being

sung and recited by the Deva Dasis i.e. the temple dancers and singers of the temple. The European scholars also immensely appreciated the articulation of Jayadeva in unequivocal terms. Sir William Jones and Friedrich Rueckert translated into English and German respectively. Later on it was translated into France, English and German by many European scholars. Now, Gitagovinda has been accepted as one of the master pieces of world literary heritage.

Jayadeva's work imbibed the spirit of classical Sanskrit poetic tradition and that of Apabhramsa and Early Bhasha poetry. The 12 sargas or cantos contain 24 songs. The frame work of the poem as in the verses form the descriptive portion. It is in the orthodox style of classic Sanskrit in manner, meter, ideas and vocabulary. The songs breathe the atmosphere of Apabhramsa or Early Bhasha i.e. New Indo-Aryan literature. Many scholars have suspected that the songs were originally written in Old Bhasha. Being a narrative poem it has a dramatic diction in it. The songs recited by the Gopis, friends of Radha and Krishna are like speeches. This speaks of its association with Yatra or Song-drama of the Old style prevailed in Orissa. It is defined as a *Khanda Kavya* or a smaller portion of a descriptive narrative character. From the point of view of subject matter it can be said to have association with Sanskrit poems like *Ritusambhar* and *Meghaduta*. This special character of the work consists in its combination of account of love with an undercurrent of conversational style. It is also combination of two styles viz. the descriptive portion and the song portion. The poem consists of all total 386 verses. In the descriptive portions and in the 24 songs which are spread through out the 12 sargas or cantos into which the poem has been divided. The

cantos have one theme. After a brief introduction in the first canto which is benedictory verses with two invocations to Vishnu he describes 10 incarnations of God and the poem makes its beginning. Thus every way the creation of Shree Jayadeva was multifaceted and multicoloured.

The supreme beauty of his verbal melody is just untranslatable in any other languages. The lines should be heard as chanted or recited in order to appreciate appropriately. Love i.e. Sringara or physical love and sexual union and love play or frank profane love is the centre of attraction in literary composition of Gitagovinda. There is background of nature in spring time embracing trees, creepers and flowers amidst hills and dais and flowing streamlets, the singing of birds and buzzing of bees. Love in it describes Kama or physical love and Sringara or sexual union in its mundane and material plane. Love and love situations as reflected in the Gitagovinda is universally appreciated. But amidst eroticism there is undercurrent of true devotional love with God. Because of this lucid presentation, the themes of Gitagovinda find reflection in Indian painting traditions. In different schools of medieval paintings of North and South India we find conspicuous presence of Gitagovinda. In erotic sculptures of contemporary North India and Orissan temple architecture we find best plastic illustrations of Gitagovinda scenes and situations. This has also inspired the artists of Gujarat and Rajasthan. In Orissa even now the paintings tradition and sculpturisation takes inspiration from Gitagovinda idiom. Jayadeva's Gitagovinda also gave birth to the new cult of Radha Krishna worship.

The name of his father was Bhojadeva and his mother was Radha Devi or Ramadevi. He has married to Padmavati. But some scholars believe that he had two wives Bijaya and Jaya who were very beautiful. Jaya was Padmavati who was dear to Jayadeva who uses to sing and dance with her. Bijaya was looking his home affairs who was expert in discharging household duties meticulously. Padmavati was a cultured lady with proficiency in scriptures and gandharva lore. Her behaviour was enchanting and her devotion to Jayadeva was unprecedented. Because of her celestial countenance she was dear to everybody. It is said that behind the success of a man there remains a woman and in case of Jayadeva Padmavati was the source of inspiration for him.

At the fag end of his life Jayadeva led the life of a Sadhu in a sacred place for emancipation. He proceeded to Benaras with his beloved wife Padmavati. There he made friendship with the Maharaja of Benaras who treated him with honour and affection. But another school of scholars opined that Jayadeva along with Padmavati spent their last part of life at Puri praying at the feet of Lord Jagannath. In fact Jayadeva was the blessed son of Saraswati who could create an immortal creation like Shree Gitagovinda. At present he efflorescently and singularly stands as a luminary of opulence in the firmament of Kalingan horizon.

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Jagannath Culture as Reflected in Gita Govinda

Dr. B.L.Malla

Sri Jayadeva was the famous composer of Shree Gita Govinda. His lucid composition of Gita Govinda became world famous during his life time especially because of its introduction in the rituals of Jagannath Culture. Its romantic as well as religious fervour ignited the devotional thought of priests, peasants and Royal personalities alike. The construction of Jagannath temple at Puri by Choda Ganga Deva in 12th Century A.D. ushered in a new era in the religious history of Orissa. With the decree of the Ganga emperors Gita Govinda was sung everyday in the temple as a result of which it became popular in every household in Orissa and India as well.

Gita Govinda describes the love sports of Radha and Krishna in a beautiful manner. The charming and simple language of the text attracted one and all from every quarter. The depiction of Avatar conception in the composition of Jayadeva deserves special mention. Similarly, the description of Radha Madhav Cult which was in vogue in Prachi region is very interesting in the poetic articulation of Jayadeva. For the first time we find reference to Radha as a cult icon in his poetic creation.

Vaishnavism received new impetus because of the impact of Jayadeva's Gita Govinda from 12th Century A.D. Many new ideas and ideation entered into the fold of Jagannath Consciousness after the emergence of great poet

Jayadeva. His work also popularized Jagannath worship in every nook and corner of Orissa. It is glorious that the great poet Jayadeva was born in the sacred soil of Prachi Valley region.

The popular Jagannath Cult is a mysterious religious system. Scholars from different parts of the country and abroad have attempted to solve the mystery of origin and evolution of Jagannath cult and have stumbled confusedly at the platform of religious eclecticism of Jagannatha Triad. Jagannath allows all and admits all, yet He is aloof from all. It is also said that He is all of it and none of it. He is like a mirror where all can see their reflection but cannot touch. He adorned his ratnasimhasan admitting flexibility, adaptability, integrity and magnanimity of all dynamics of Hinduism. For this, the Jains, Buddhas, Vaisnavas, Saivas, Saktas, the tribal aboriginals, prelates and potentates surrender at His feet seeking eternal salvation. The earliest reference to Jagannath-Daru worship is found in the Vedic literature. In the Mahabharata there is mention about a Vedi near the eastern Kalingan sea. Scholars have identified this spot with the present day Jagannath temple complex of Puri. Indrabhuti the king of Sambala in his famous work Gyanasiddhi speaks to Jagannath as Buddha in the 8th century A.D.

Sankaracharya in course of his religious conquest of India in 8th/9th century A.D. visited Puri and worshipped Jagannath. The

Anargharaghava Natakam of Murari Misra (9th century A.D.) refers to Purusottama. There is mention about a 'devayatana' that existed at Puri in Prabodha Chandra-dayo Natakam of Krusna Misra (11th century A.D.). The Saradadevi temple inscriptions of Mahihar in Satna district of Madhya Pradesh describes Purusottama as the Lord of Utkala in 10th century A.D. In the Baramdeo temple epigraph of 1088 A.D. and Nagpur inscription of 12th century A.D., there is reference to Purusottama Kshetra that existed in Orissa. In ancient Hindi literature like Bisaldev Raso (12th century A.D.), Prithvirayo Roso of the same century Jagannath is described as the deity of Orissa.

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

The foreign scholars like Stevens, Wilson and Fergusson etc have traced his origin in Buddhism. Rajendralal Mitra has opined that during pre-Christian century only Buddhism was in vogue in Orissa. Chinese traveller like Yuan Chwang has narrated that Mahayana Buddhism was the religion of Utkala in 7th century A.D.. This school of scholars believe that original Jagannath temple complex was a Buddhist establishment. Very recently a Chunar sand stone pillar has been traced out below the fossilized Garuda pillar of Natamandira while repairing it by ASI. This further strengthened the Buddhist origin of Jagannath. From the funeral pyre of

Buddha at Kasinagar a tooth relic was known to have been brought by Therakhema to Puri of Orissa. For this for centuries Puri was called Dantapuri. It is believed that it is still there as Brahmadhata, in the wooden statue of Jagannath which is mysteriously shifted to the new idols at the time of Navakalevara. Alexander Cunningham has stated that "the three shapeless figures of Jagananth and His brother and sister are simple copies of the symbolical figures of the Buddhist triad i.e. Buddha, Dharma and Sangha of which the 2nd is always represented as a female. The Buddhist origin of the Jagannath figure is proved beyond all doubt by their adoption as the representative of the Brahmanical avatar of Buddha in the annual almanacs of Mathura and Benaras." Dr. H. K. Mahatab has also referred to a similar stone of Asokan polis with the symbol of Buddha, Sangha and Dhama discovered and sent to Calcutta University sometime back for preservation in Asutosh Museum. According to him "the Savaras of Orissa were converted to Buddhism during the time of Asoka and worshipped the Triratna symbol in a Buddhist stupa at Puri. Later on in the 7th/8th century A.D., when Buddha was considered as an avatar of Vishnu, Jagannath was also considered to be an avatara of Vishnu. Gradually Buddhism lost itself in Vaisnavism."

Another school of scholar like Nilakantha Das believed in Jaina association of Jagannath cult, so far its origin is concerend. He has tried to identify Nilamadhava with Kalinga Jina referred to in the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela which was known to have been taken by Nanda ruler as war trophy in 4th century B.C. The said Jaina symbol came to be known as Nila i.e. void or black. The image of Jagannath, that is why represents black colour or void. Subhadra is being identified with the Dharmachakra of Jainas and Kavalya so closely connected with Jagannath, has in fact Jaina origin. Kedar Mahapatra and

Binayak Misra also subscribe to this school of thought. For this they have attempted to identify the legendary Indradyumna with emperor Kharavela who brought back the Kalinga Jina in 1st century B. C. which was taken away by Mahapadma Nanda in 4th century B.C. to Pataliputra.

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

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

The Krisna avatara lila of Dvapara Yuga was thus to be concluded. Lord Krisna, to leave the mundane world was swinging in the forest. A Savara, thinking Him to be a deer shoot an arrow at Krisna. When the Savara came to know of this he cried and prayed God to excuse him. Consoling him the Lord said that this incident was preordained to put an end to his avatar of Dvaparajuga. He further directed him to burn His

body and to immerse the ashes in the ocean. The Savara could not completely burn His body. As per heavenly direction, he threw it in the ocean. It floated and in course of time came to Mahodadhi i.e. Puri sea beach. The then king of Puri Indradyumna dreamt of this and as per the divine direction brought it to the palace to make the wooden statues of Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath.

A story goes that no carpenter could handle the wooden log. Ultimately an old carpenter came and assured the king that he can make the statues under one condition that he would not be disturbed for fourteen days and he would do his job inside the temple by locking the door. The king agreed to the terms and conditions. But hearing no sound of the carpenter from outside, the Queen insisted the king to break open the door before the completion of 14 days and to his surprise the king found the deities half made and the old carpenter vanished. He prayed God who advised him to worship Him in that form which we find today. Many such other stories in different versions are found about the Savara connection of the Jagannath culture. The Daitapatis now claim their origin to this Sabar tribe.

Thus the synthetic and syncretic cult of Jagannath is the embodiment of several cults of diverse religious philosophies that existed in India in different periods of her long cultural history. In the historic process of assimilation, it has embraced strange contradictions and varied traditions of various religious orders and has emerged as a universal heritage of world eminence.

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Poet Jayadev Belongs to Orissa

Tarakanta Mohanty

Sri Jayadev is famous amongst the poets of India for his book entitled Geeta Govinda that contains devotional songs reflecting the glories of Lord Krishna. Moreover this book since its inception, has been attracting classical singers as well as dancers all over the country for it, splenders, styles and pictureque description in Sanskrit. The lyrics of the book have attracted numerous devotees of India especially the Vaishnavites to such an extent that they get the verses by heart to chant while offering prayer to Almighty.

Although poet Jayadev and his Geeta Govinda became renowned all over the country, his birth place remains controversial even up to the later part of the twentieth century. Poet Jayadev was wrongly depicted as a court poet of Laxman Sen, the king of Bengal of twelfth century by Ceylonese poet George Keyt in the forward of his book 'Song of Love' published by Hindi Books, New Delhi.

Secondly, a Bengali poet named Banamali Das of nineteenth century in his book 'Jayadeva's creation' had written that the poet Jayadev belonged to Kenduli village of Birbhumi (West Bengal). But these facts were contradicted and reputed by Oriya scholars, indologists and orientalis. They are of the opinion that poet Jayadev was born in the village Kenduli or Kenduvilla in the bank of river Prachi, a few miles

away from Puri, the renowned Vaishnava seat of India and famous for Lord Jagannath temple basing on the following facts.

1. Pandit Keshava Mishra, A Maithili scholar in his book 'Alankar Sekhar' has opined that Jayadev was greatest of the poets and scholars who had adorned Utkal Bhupati Sabha.
2. Maithili poet Chandradutta in his book 'Bhakti Mala', written in Sanskrit has opined his views that Jayadev was an 'Utkal Brahmin' and he was dwelling near Puri.
3. Navojee of Gwalior who had authored the book 'Bhaktimala' in Hindi had mentioned about Jayadev in 1585 as a poet of the then Utkal.
4. Poet Mahipati of Maharashtra in his book titled 'Bhakti Vijaya' had given hints that poet Jayadev belonged to Kenduvilla (Kendubillwa) near Puri.
5. In 'Kuladipak', a book written in Assamese language, it has been admitted that Jayadev was of Utkal.
6. Pandit Mallagi Suryanarayan Shastri, a scholar of Andhra Pradesh in his book titled 'Sanskrit Poets Biography' has mentioned that the author of Geeta Govinda of eleventh century belonged to Kendubillwa near Jagannath Kshetra Utkal.

7. Haridas Hirachand of Maharashtra in 1365 admitted in the foreward of a book edited by him in Marathi language that Jayadev was born near Srikshetra in the village of Kendubilwa.

8. Dr Parsuram Chaturvedi, a critic of Hindu literature in his book 'Uttar Bharat Ki Santh Parampara' written in Hindi had mentioned that poet Jayadev belonged to Utkal.

9. It has been proved that there is no such village named Kenduli in the revenue map of Birbhum (West Bengal)

10. The temple named after Jayadev in West Bengal claimed by some Bengali scholars was proved, sub-sequently, to be built by the queen of Burdhaman in 1683, where as there are enough evidences to show that Jayadev belonged to twelfth century. The inscription of Lord Jagannath temple which is about 500 years prior to the construction of the so called Jayadev temple by the queen of Burdhamana, clearly mentioned that Lord Jagannath listens to Geeta Govinda of Poet Jayadev before he retires to sleep.

11. Geeta Govinda Seva in Sri Mandir i.e. temple of Lord Jagannath is so well known and common that its author seems to belong to its nearby river. Moreover 'Geeta Govinda Khurdha (a special cloth with verses of Geeta Gonda woven on its body) a shawl used by Lord Jagannath during night is produced by weavers of Nuapatna and Maniabandha (District Cuttack).

12. According to Madala almanac, poet Narasingha Dev had introduced singing of Geeta Gonvinda in the temple of Lord Jagannath.

13. An attempt was made during the reign of king Purusottama Dev to change the Geeta

Govinda Seva in Lord Jagannath temple. But it could not get recognition. So Gajapati Prataparudra Dev had recorded in the inscription lying at Jaya Vijaya Gate of Jagannath that "The Geeta Govinda of Bada Thakura should be sung and danced at the time of offering to the Lord."

14. Jayadev was from Orissa say Bengali scholars (The Daily Statesman, 12th November 2003). The extract from the newspaper Statesman dated 12th November 2003 Bhubaneswar edition points out the following facts.

'In a major turning point in the controversy over the birth place of the 12th century Sanskrit poet Jayadev, known all over the world as the writer of "Geeta Govinda" Kolkata scholars asserted at a national seminar of Utkal University of Culture, Bhubaneswar that the poet was born in Orissa and not in West Bengal.

Mr. Ashok Kumar Chakraborty, Superintendent of Gurusaday Museum, Kolkota, revealed that way back in 1979, he had submitted a report to the famous Jayadev Scholar, Dr. Kapila Vatsayan proving that Kenduvillwa village in Birbhum in West Bengal could not be the birth place of the poet. He was followed by historian Professor S. Sengupta of Kolkata who corroborated him and said that it is Kenduli village on the banks of river Prachi in Puri which is the birth place of the poet. Both the scholars cited a number of social-cultural, artitechtural and philosophical evidences to prove their points.

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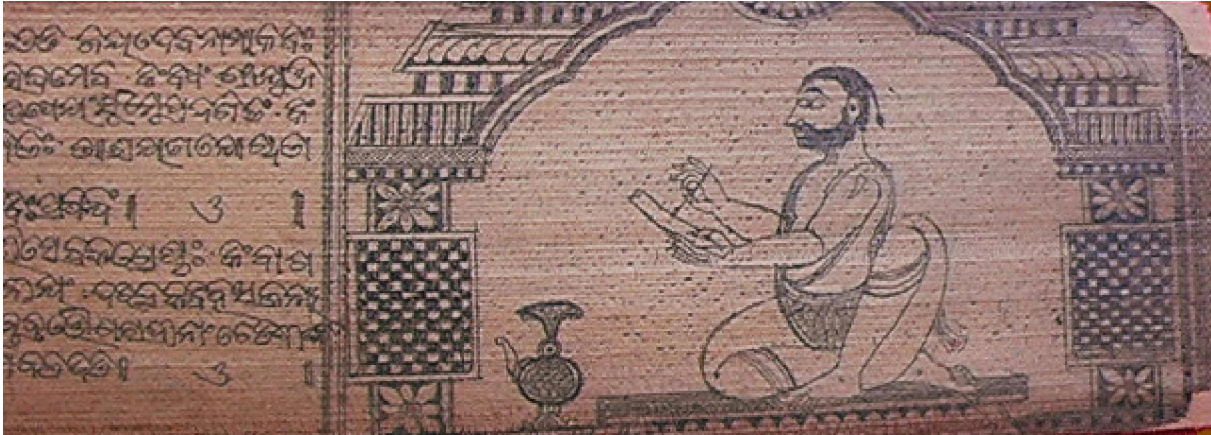
New Light on Saint Poet Sri Jayadev and Gitagovinda

Ajit Kumar Tripathy

Historical Perspective of Saint Poet Sri Jayadev

The Ganga King ruled over Kalinga from the 6th Century to 11th Century A.D. At that time Kalinga was restricted by river Rusikulya in the north and Simhachal hills in the south. At the centre of Kalinga was the Mahendragiri range of hills. The Mathar Kings who ruled over Kalinga before

temple was constructed in the 10th century A.D. by Madhukamarnava Deva a Ganga king. His son Vajrahasta Deva did quite a lot of development works for the temple and laid down all the rites and rituals for worship of the deity. From copper plate issued by him it is known that he had brought a number of families adept in dance from Baidumba kingdom which was the home of the maternal uncle of Vajrahasta Deva. These families



the Gangas had Singhapur as their Capital. But after the fall of Mathar dynasty the Ganga kings established their Capital at Kalinga Nagar on the bank of river Vamsadhara. To-day it is located in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh known as Nagari Katak.

Very close to this place is a place known as Mukhalingam in which the Madhukeswar Siva

gradually increased in number and the king settled them in a village called Srikurumapatak at the distance of 19km from Kalinga Nagar on the sea coast. There is a Vishnu temple there enshrining Srikuruma Avatar (Tortoise incarnation of Visnu). The Vaishnavites who came from southern India taught Sanskrit literature, philosophy and religious texts to the students in this place. There was also a school for music and dance at Srikurumapatak

for the dancing girls and boys. The temple dancers were called Sani.

The Ganga Kings ruled over Kalinga for about 400 years and then Chodaganga Deva was born to Maharaja Devendravarma Rajaraja Deva and queen Rajasundari who was the daughter of the Chola King of Kanchi named Maharaja Kulatunga Rajendra Chola the Second. Rajasundari had two sons namely, Cholaganga Deva and Pamardy. When Rajaraja Deva died prematurely in 1077 A.D., Cholaganga Deva was only 5 year old and Pamardy, the second son was only 3 year old.

Kalinga was thus without a ruler. The neighbouring states wanted to occupy Kalinga. In order to save the kingdom and the two kids from the enemies Rajasundari the widowed queen desperately sought the help of her brother Virachoda who was ruling over the Bengi Kingdom. Virachoda accepted the request, came to Kalinga Nagar and organised the coronation of the child Cholaganga Deva. He got his own kid daughter Gundichodi, later on known as Kasturikamodini, married to Cholaganga Deva and proclaimed that Kalinga was not without a ruler. Virachoda was a brave and intelligent king himself. He engaged teachers of high caliber for the education of his daughter and the son-in-law. Cholaganga Deva, later led a huge army and started a series of campaign against the neighbouring enemy kingdoms.

Situated to the east of Kalinga was Utkal which was ruled at that time by the Somavansi king Karnadeva. Cholaganga attacked Utkal. With this battle for the conquest of Utkal, the Somavansa got eliminated. Cholaganga then defeated Chalukya King of Bengi and also defeated Pala King of Bangal at Mandargada and Armanagar, at present known as Arambag. He extended his Kingdom Kalinga from Godavari in

the south-west to Ganga in the north-east. In 1112 A.D. he shifted his capital from Kalinga Nagar to Varanasi Katak which is at present known as Bidanasi. From Deopara copper plate inscription it is known that Vijayasena prided himself as a friend of Cholaganga.

Since it took some time to bring about peace and stability in the conquered territories of Utkal and Banga, Cholaganga alongwith his family stayed in Kalinga Nagar upto 1126 A.D. and then shifted to Varanasi Katak after restoration of peace and stability. In 1050 Sakabda (1128 A.D.) his first year of reign was declared to be counted as found from an inscription in Nrusingha temple near Mukti Mandap at Srimandir. Cholaganga assumed the title of *Parama Maheswara*, *Parama Vaisnava* and *Parama Brahmanya*. He was initially a Saiva and later on became Vaisnava. His Saiva Guru was a Sadhu in Madhukeswar temple and his Vaisnav Guru was from Vishnu temple of Kurumapatak.

Cholaganga Deva organised the coronation of his eldest son Sri Kamarnava Deva at Sri Purusottama Temple of Puri and stayed in his palace at Puri for the rest of his life. This was in the year 1142 A.D. Cholaganga Deva started the construction of the present Jagannath Temple at Puri. At the coronation function temple dancers from Sri Kurumapatak were called to perform dance at the Lord Jagannath Temple. This sect was known as Sani sect. As found out from the temple inscriptions at Madhukeswar temple and Simanchal Temple, the Ganga Kings had encouraged this tradition of temple dancers in the kingdom of Kalinga, and then in the Kalinga empire.

As recorded in an inscription in the Lingaraj Temple, Bhubaneswar, during the reign of Raghava Deva, the second son of Chodaganga

Deva, all the land rights for a region called *Baheda Khanda* were purchased from Sadhu Pradhan Jayadeva of Kurmapataka and donated to Kirtivaswar (Lord Lingaraj) by Medam Devi, her father Komi Nayaka and her mother. The three of them had donated three *Akhanda Dipas* (arrangements for non-stop burning of oil-lamps) to the temple. They belonged to the Sani sect.

A similar inscription appears on Madhukeswar temple at Mukhalingam where Komi Nayak, father of Medam Devi and his wife Nagama Devi (Title of *Gudisani* meaning Temple Dancer) arranged for offering an *akhanda deepa* in the temple in 1113 A.D.

There is yet another inscription in the said Madhukeswar temple in which they had offered *akhanda deepa* in 1128 A.D. The system of providing *Akhanda Dipa* and donating rights of land to the deities appears to be common in the three events in 1113, 1128 and 1156 A.D. The presence of Jayadeva and his description as *Kurmapataka Pravara* establishes that he had close lineage with the dancing families of Kurmapataka who had come to Orissa during the period of Chodaganga Deva. had the *Gudi Sanis* (temple actors and dancers) been socially looked down upon, then their donations to temples could not have been accepted and immortalized in inscriptions. The two inscriptions at Madhukeswar temple and the one at Simhachal temple were discovered, read and interpreted by Dr. Satyanarayan Rajaguru, the Pitamaha Bhisma of historians and linguists of Orissa. Read with the inscription at Lingaraj temple, it leads to the conclusion that Jayadeva had been a member of the teaching faculty of the school at Srikurmapatak. He might have studied there as well. After his childhood education he must have gone to Srikurmapataka and gained experience in composition of poetry and music and in dancing.

He perhaps came back to Orissa alongwith the group and performed in the Puri temple.

Sri Jayadeva, the celebrated Poet of Gitagovinda was born in the village Kenduivilva Sasan or Kenduli Sasan in Balipatna P.S. in Khurda district, a part of the earlier Puri district. He was most likely born in the first part of 12th Century A.D. during the reign of Chologanga Deva. Kenduli Sasan close to the river Prachi then was inhabited mostly by Brahmins. The presiding deity in the village is Ambika and there is a Nrusingha temple as well. Jayadeva must have gone for higher education in Sanskrit literature and music to Kurmapataka and after education he must have become a tutor there. That is why the two titles '*Kurmapataka Pravara*' and '*Sadhu Pradhan*' have been mentioned against him in the Lingaraj Temple inscription. Read together the three inscriptions indicate to the fact of close association of Jayadeva to the family of Komi Nayaka and to the institution at Kurmapataka.

Prachi valley witnessed the rise and spread of Jainism, Buddhism, Saivism, Saktism, Sun cult and Vaisnavism. Kenduivilva and many other villages nearby are full of religious monuments dedicated to different cults. Numerous temples were erected by Bhaumas, Somavanshis and the Gangas in the Prachi valley. Village Kenduli Sasan has rich relics of brick and stone temples and sculptures of Saiva, Vaisnav and Sakta cults as well as Buddhism belonging to the period between 9th and 13th Century A.D. In Prachi Valley whether the temple has a Sakta or Saiva deity, Gitagovinda is recited on festive occasions which symbolise the influence of Vaisnavism over Saktism and the immense popularity of the text of Gitagovinda.

The copper plate grant of Nrusingha Deva the 4th which was recovered from a tank near the Nrusingha temple of Kenduli village, was

originally issued from Varanasi Katak in A.D. 1383. It refers to establishment of Narasinghpur Sasan donated to one Mahapatra Narahari Das Praharaj who was the minister of Narasingha Deva. This Sasan is located very close to Kenduivilva on Prachi valley. This grant also contains the names of Olatapura and Attahaspura Sasan adjacent to Kenduli established by Attahasdeva, the youngest son of Chologanga Deva.

To quote Dr. Harish Chandra Das

“While discussing about the historical background of Jayadeva it will perhaps not be out of place to glance through how he introduced Radha and Mahava and *dasavatara* cult in the most popular manner breaking the stylized tradition. From this point of view *Gitagovinda* is virtually a historical text unfurling the historical truth through his poetic narration. The cult of Madhava which is historically proved to be in existence in Orissa from seventh or eighth century A.D. gained great momentum from the time of Jayadeva. The first epigraphical evidence of Madhava, we come across in the copper plate grant of Madhavaraja of the Sailodbhava dynasty, where the scribe has particularized the epithet of Chakrayudha Madhava. The image of Nilamadhava installed by the Bhanja monarch at Gandharadi (ninth century A.D.) comes next in order of chronology. The image of Santosa Madhava recorded to in the copper plate grant of Indravarman Codaganga, Madhava in the pillar inscriptions of Rellivalasa at Srikakulam, numerous Madhava sculptures and temples in Prachi valley are clear revelation of the long-continued tradition of Madhava worship in Orissa with wide distribution in Prachi valley, the birth place of Jayadeva who in course of his wanderings and as a devout worshipper of Madhava infused exuberantly in his *Gitagovinda* the lucid

description of Madhava, his deity of love and admiration.”

Sri Jayadeva introduced the cult of Radha and Krishna through his *Gitagovinda* and due to the influence of *Shrimad Bhagavata* and *Gitagovinda* and the composite figure of Krishna and Vishnu as Gopinath became very popular in Orissa. When Vaisnavism became the state religion of Orissa the composite sculpture of Krishna and Vishnu with upper two hands in the pose of playing the flute, standing in *Tribhanga* associated with *Astagopi* and cattle which is the characteristic feature of Krishna, indicates the amalgamation of two cults at a time. The long continued tradition of *Dasavatara* had a deep imprint on Sri Jayadeva who popularised the 10 Avatars of Vishnu in lucid language, which would be put to music and dance.

To quote Dr. Harish Chandra Das again

“That the concept of ten incarnations of Visnu was widely prevalent in Orissa since seventh century A.D. is substantiated by literary and archaeological evidences. In this connection mention may be made of Varaha worship referred to in the copper plate of Dharmaraja of the Sailodbhava dynasty and other individual and collective images particularly in coastal Orissa which speak in short the prevalence of *dasavatara worship* in Orissa before the advent of Jayadeva. Jayadeva in his composition (*dasakrtikrte*) has shown the greatness of Lord Visnu in his ten incarnations individually.

It was Sri Jayadeva who institutionalised the *Devadasi* system introduced from the time of Somavansi Kings. *Devadasis* or *Maharis* were women dedicated to the deity in the temple for performance of dance and music. The importance of this dancing service became so great that a special structure called *Natamandir* was added to the *Viman* and *Jagamohan*.”

Madhava Patnaik a Vaishnavite poet was a contemporary of *Panchasakha* and Sri Chaitanya. As is well known, *Panchasakha* refers to Balarama Das, Jagannatha Das, Achyuta Das, Ananta Das and Yashovanta Das, the saint poets of Orissa. Madhava Patnaik has described in detail the events in the later part of life of Sri Chaitanya in Puri. In this book is given a graphic description of the development of Vaishnavism in Orissa.

The following are the facts from this book which clearly mentioned that (i) Chodaganga Deva actually renovated an old temple and started construction of the present Jagannatha temple, and he had conducted in the temple itself the *Abhishek* of crown prince Kamarnava Deva, (ii) On this occasion dancers were called from the South to perform dance and drama in the Puri temple. (iii) A small *Natamandir* was constructed and arrangements were made for presentation of regular dance and drama by *Maharis* (Temple dancers) in the honour of Lord Jagannatha in the temple during the time of Chodaganga Deva and his son. (iv) Chaitanya after he had arrived at Puri was advised by Pandits to go to Rajamahendri to meet Raya Ramananda who was Governor of this southern province of Orissa. There Chaitanya came to know about *Dvaitavada* and *Advaitavada* from Raya Ramananda (v) Bipra Jayadeva was born in Kenduli Sasan on the bank of river Prachi. He worshipped Madhava at Niali. He was an expert in the *Shastras* and *Puranas*, music and dance. He was a saint poet who composed the *Geeta Govinda* in the temple of Jagannatha at Puri and his wife Padmavati danced to the tunes of Geeta Govinda before Jagannath. (vi) Chaitanya and *Panchasakha* were going on *Sankirtan* Trips to different parts of Orissa for a number of years. One such annual trip started from Ananta Vasudeva temple of Bhubaneswar

and ended at Puri touching Balakati-Kenduli-Niali, Madhav, Adaspur, Kakatpur and Konark.

Madhav Patnaik has described as to how Srichaitanya and *Panchasakha* were dancing in *Sankirtan* singing Gitagobinda at Kenduli village which was the birth place of Jayadeva. This book was discovered and compiled from three Palm leaf manuscripts collected in Orissa from three places in the early 1980s.

Gitagovinda of Sri Jayadev, therefore, is accepted as a historical text in addition to its great literary and religious significance. Sri Jayadev initially highlighted and systematised the traditional cults but also introduced his own ideologies, poetic imagery and music. Both Chodaganga Deva and his son Kamarnav were disciples of Ramanuja and devotees of Sri Jagannath and his consort Laxmi. Jayadeva was influenced by Ramanuja's ideology of Jagannath and Laxmi. In *Gitagovinda* Krishna tells Radha that formerly she as Laxmi chose Him as her consort on the sea shore on the occasion of *Samudra Manthana*. As a result of this incident Siva swallowed poison out of despair. *Gitagovinda* was composed before 1150 A.D. and *Gitagovinda* dance drama was enacted in Puri temple during the rein of Chodaganga Deva and Kamarnavadeva. The earliest reference to Jayadeva outside Orissa was made by poet Chandabaradai, the Court poet of Prithviraj Chauhan who was defeated and killed in 1192 A.D. by Md. Ghori in the battle of Tirori. The next earliest reference is found in an inscription of Raja Sarangadev in the year 1201 A.D. Therefore, it is established that *Gitagovinda* because of its regular performance in Sri Jagannath temple of Puri assumed popularity throughout India within a brief period of 30-40 years of its composition. It combined the best in the rich traditions of philosophy, literature, music and dance in Kalinga and Utkal. The philosophy

was developed later into *Achintya Bheda Bheda Tatwa*, so ably propounded by Raya Ramananda and accepted and immortalized by Sri Chaitanya, *Pancha Sakha* and the *Shad Goswamis*.

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The Gitagovinda in the History of Shri Jagannath Temple

The *Gitagovinda* of *Jayadeva*, divinely adorned and devotionally oriented, acquires a unique place among the famous scriptures of the world. As a sublime and spontaneous display of devotional romantic poetry centring around love episodes of *Radha* and *Krsna*, it was the first of its kind to be included in the ritual service of Lord Jagannath as an essential component of worship. Besides its scholastic value, its sweet flow and the intensely musical verses have attracted the attention and spontaneous regard of millions of people through centuries. The singing of the *Gitagovinda* alongwith the accompaniment of music and lovely dance of the *devadasi* in the *Srimandira* was the most fascinating daily service of Lord Jagannath, which had attracted many devotees from all parts of India.

In the absence of authentic historical evidence, it is difficult to say whether there already

existed specific arrangements for ceremonious worship of Lord Jagannath by the *devadasis* before the inauguration of the present temple or was introduced thereafter. The practice of temple dances was there in Orissa during the time of *Somavamshi* kings as well.

It is ascertained from the *Madala Panji* (temple chronicle) that as introduced by the *Ganga* emperor Ananga Bhimadeva-II (1211 A.D. - 1228 A.D), the rituals and services of Lord Jagannath were performed by a number of functionaries (*sevakas*). Their duties, rights and responsibilities had been codified. The *sevakas* belonged to different castes and were all more or less equal in importance in relation to Lord Jagannath. They were inter-dependent and were mutually connected by a vast network of rituals and services. As the worship of the lord was conducted by 36 different communities, it was termed as *Chhatisa niyoga*. This *niyoga* or collective service comprised of three classes or divisions. These were :

- (i) *Pratihari Niyoga*
- (ii) *Suara and Mahasuar Niyoga* and
- (iii) *Bhitarachhu Niyoga*

It was the responsibility of the representative of a *niyoga* to supervise the conduct of worship of Lord Jagannath. The *Gajapati* as the head of the *niyoga* had the right to inflict suitable punishment if any *sevak* neglected in his duties. For centuries, in spite of many national and political calamities, this mode of worship to the Lord has been continuing for generations. Orissa came under the Mughal rule which continued till 1751 A.D. i.e. till the beginning of *Marhatta* rule. During the Muslim rule, the temple of Lord Jagannath was subjected to many

assaults. As a result, the Deities had to be carried many a times for safe to dense forests and often buried underground for protection from the Muslim intruders a number of times. Needless to say that during these days of external attacks, the usual ritualistic services were disturbed. But, the Deities were repeatedly restored. After the Marathas took over, no deviation from the specified mode of service to the Lord has ever come to notice.

In 1751 A.D. the Marhattas occupied Orissa including Puri, the abode of Lord Jagannath. They appointed officials to supervise the day to day conduct of worship of Lord Jagannath. In 1803 after Orissa came under the British rule, an English officer Mr. C.Grom prepared a report on the rituals of service to Lord Jagannath in Srimandira basing it on the practice then in vogue. This report speaks of 36 distinct units of service with 250 persons engaged in day to day conduct of worship to the Lord. In this list of elaborate rituals of service, mention has been made of recital of the Gitagovinda before the sanctum of Lord Jagannath accompanied by the dance of devadasi (unmarried young girls dedicated and married to the Lord). For this, many artistes adept in the art of music and dance had been appointed. They were treated as employees of the State and were granted all rights and privileges meant for royal officers. This practice has started from the time of Emperor Chodaganga Deva.

The service of singing of the Gitagovinda to the accompaniment of the dance of the devadasi has been duly recognised as an indispensable phase of worship codified in the 'Record of Rights'. The Gitagovinda was sung every evening in the inner shrine called *Jaya-Vijaya Dvara* (guarded on both sides by images of celestial guards Jaya and Vijaya).

After nocturnal offering of *arati*, Lord Jagannath, the Lord of Universe, puts on the most attractive *Badasinghara Vesa* gorgeously attained in costly apparel and decorated lavishly with flowers and garlands. Then, the Gitagovinda was sung with a devadasi dancing before the Lord. Thereafter the deities are covered with silken scarfs which are known as *Gitagovinda khandua* (the *sevaka* rendering this service is known as the *Changuda Mekap*). The devadasis are named *maharis* and their dance is called *mahari-dance* or *rahasa*. In course of time, the *mahari* dance has evolved into *Odisi* dance.

According to the *Madala Panji*, the Ganga emperor Narasingha Deva II (1278 A.D. - 1307 A.D) better known in the history as the poet Narasingha Dev had for the first time introduced singing of the Gitagovinda in the service of Lord Jagannath. "*E uttaru kavi Narasingha Deva raja hoile, Gitagovinda siloukale.*" (*Madala Panji*, Prachi Edition, page.36)

But, at the same time, it has also been recorded in the *Madala Panji* that emperor Kamarnava Deva (1146 A.D. - 1156 A.D.) better known in historical accounts as *Ekajata Deva*, the eldest son of Chodaganga Deva, the founder of the Ganga empire, did not touch even a drop of water without hearing the Gitagovinda. It, therefore, goes without saying that the Gitagovinda had been composed much earlier than the reign of Narasingha Deva II and had already earned royal attention and patronage. Had it not been so, the recitation of the Gitagovinda before Kamarnava Deva would have been out of question. It is quite apparent that the Gitagovinda had already acquired a conspicuous place in the ritual service of Srimandira, but for some reason or other, this practice was

discontinued and was revived again by Narasingha Deva II.

After 'Sri Jagannath Temple Act' was passed by the Government of Orissa in 1956, the ritual services were brought into the zone of legal jurisdiction. According to the provision of the Act, there are 119 services instituted and they are recorded on hereditary basis in the 'Records of Rights'. Before the enforcement of 'Sri Jagannath Temple Act-1956' hereditary rights of seva (service) used to be recorded in the *Chhamu Chitau*. The hereditary rights of seva are :

(1) Gajapati Maharaja, (2) Parichha or Rajaguru, (3) Chhatisa Niyoga Nayak Seva (4) Pattayosi Mahapatra Seva, (5) Bhitarchhu, (6) Talichha (7) Mudrahasta, (8) Deula Purohita, (9) Pujapanda, (10) Badapanda, (11) Pasupalaka or Puspalaka Seva, (12) Mudra, (13) Khuntia, (14) Bhandara Mekap Seva, (15) Palia Mekap Seva, (16) Akhanda Mekapa Seva, (17) Changada Mekapa Seva, (18) Khata Seja Mekapa Seva, (19) Pratihari Seva, (20) Daita Seva, (21) Pati Mahapatra Seva, (22) Patribadu Seva, (23) Garabadu Seva, (24) Suarabadu, (25) Khuri Nahaka, (26) Mukha Pakhala Sevaka, (27) Ghatuari, (28) Gochhikara Seva, (29) Suna Gosvami Seva, (30) Muduli Seva, (31) Alati Balita Seva, (32) Purana Panda, (33) Datta Mahapatra Seva, (34) Lugadhua and Panikunda Seva, (35) Ballabha Yoganias Seva, (36) Bimana Badu Seva, (37) Anasara Suddhasuara and Suddhasuara, (38) Hadap Nayak (39) Bidia Yoganias, (40) Khatuli Sevaka, (41) Asthana Pratihari, (42) Kothabhoga Yoganias (43) Pradhani, (44) Paika, (45) Lenka Sevaka, (46) Suar Niyoga Nayak Seva, (47) Suara Niyoga and Mahasuara, (48) Jagia Mahasuara or Rosa Amina, (49) Badu Suara Seva, (50) Panti

Badu, (51) Amalutodali Purakharadi, (52) Tolabadu (53) Rosapaika (54) Bahara Deuli Suara, (55) Bahara Deula Yoganias, (56) Rosadho Pakhalia, (57) Handi Yoganias and Tolabadu Seva, (58) Biribata Samartha Seva, (59) Kotha Bhoga Pania, (60) Panikipata, (61) Nikapa or Gandhana Nikapa Seva, (62) Biribuhia, (63) Daudibata, (64) Chunara Garuda Sevaka, (65) Sabata Niyoga, (66) Paniapata, (67) Mandani Seva, (68) Chaka Apsara Sevaka, (69) Mulia Suansia, (70) Binakara Seva, (71) Darpania or Bairakhia, (72) Kotha Suansia, (73) Mahabhoi, (74) Gitagovinda Sevaka, (75) Bhitaraagani Devadasi, (76) Samprada Niyoga, (77) Dayanamali, (78) Madeli, (79) Prasadabadu, (80) Badu Mahapatra (81) Tatura, (82) Patarabandha, (83) Chhatara Niyoga Seva, (84) Kahalia, (85) Sankhua, (86) Parvayatra Yoganias, (87) Chitrakara, (88) Rupakara, (89) Bania Sevaka, (90) Tamara Bisoi, (91) Karatia, (92) Benta Bindha Paika, (93) Patara Bisoi, (94) Kalabethia, (95) Daraji Seva, (96) Kumbhara Bisoi, (97) Ratha Bhoi, (98) Malachula Seva, (99) Banua, (100) Chakra Dihudia, (101) Ojha Maharana Seva, (102) Ghanta Seva, (103) Ghantua, (104) Rathadakua, (105) Badhei Sevaka, (106) Baidya, (107) Amunia Chhatara, (108) Chhamu Dihudi, (109) Chapa Behera, (110) Chapa Dalai, (111) Mapasaita Karana or Mahaprasastha Seva, (112) Tadau Karana, Bhandara Karana, Changada Karana, (113) Deula Karana, (114) Bethi Karana, (115) Kotha Karana, (116) Charcha Karana, (117) Dayanapatri, (118) Chaula Bachha Karana, (119) Matha and Byaktigata Seva.

Among the sevas and the sevakas mentioned above, the Gitagovinda seva (Sl. No. 74), Devadasi Seva (Sl. No.75) and Samprada

Niyoga (Sl. No.76) can be taken note of for further discussions :-

1. The Gitagovinda Seva :

The functionaries engaged in this service are known as the Sadhibandha Sevaka. They sing the Gitagovinda daily close to the inner shrine at the time of *Chandanalagi* (smearing the deities with sandal paste).

2.Devadasi Seva (Bhitara Gaani) :

The devadasi used to sing the Gitagovinda and perform dance at different times of the day. Besides, she used to sing and dance at the time of Baladhupa (first morning offering of food to the deities) every morning in the month of *Kartika*. She used to attend the *chandanyatra* of the Lord which continued for 42 days, singing and dancing in the *chapa* (rowing boats) for 21 days. In addition to this, the devadasi used to sing and dance at *Rukmini vivah* (marriage of Rukmini Devi), at the temple of *Laksmi*, on the day of *Niladri Vije* while accompanying *Laksmi* to *bheta mandapa*. She also used to attend to 16 phases of worship of *Bimala* in the month of *Asvina* and also join the ritual procession. The devadasis were *Sadhibandha sevikas*, which indicates their superior rank of service to the Lord. According to the prevalent rules of the temple, they were forbidden either to marry or indulge in sexual activities. But they could adopt a daughter of a touchable caste, who could be enlisted as a Sadhibandha Sevika after she was trained adequately in music and dance. At the time of any inconvenience, such as the monthly periods the Samprada Niyoga is to manage the service assigned to the Devadasi.

3. Samprada Niyoga :

The *Samprada Niyoga* is to sing and dance at the time of first morning offering of food and sandal paste daily. During the Chandana Yatra,

they dance on the *chapa* (rowing boats) and in *Bahuda*, Rukmini marriage. At Jagmohan they used to sing and dance.

Emperor Bhanu Deva II of Ganga dynasty (1306/1307 A.D.-1328 A.D.) ruled the country in the name of *Purusottam Jagannatha* and hence, he was termed in history as Purusottama Deva. According to the copper plate inscription of the *Punjabi Matha* in Puri, he was a devotee of *Govinda* and *Sripati*. He attempted to compose another Gitagovinda following the original one and introduce it in the daily worship of srimandira. He had to face strong opposition by the sevakas engaged in temple service. This was said to be the royal edition of the Gitagovinda. Some verses of this royal edition of the Gitagovinda found place in the copies of the original Gitagovinda which are called the interpolated verses of the Gitagovinda. Kaviraj Narayan Dasa, the famous Oriya commentator has not furnished in his *Sarvangasundari Tika* the explanatory notes on these interpolated verses.

During the reign of Gajapati emperor Purusottam Deva (1467-1497 A.D.) of Surya dynasty, Kavichandra Ray Dibakar Misra had composed *Abhinava* Gitagovinda in the name of Purusottam Deva in imitation of the original Gitagovinda. The Gajapati included the *Abhinava* Gitagovinda in the daily ritual service of Lord Jagannath and withdrew the Gitagovinda of Jayadeva. The priests were opposed to it but they could not raise their voice in fear of the Gajapati. After Purusottam Deva, his son Prataprudra Deva (1497-1540 A.D.) ascended the throne. In the *Vaisnava Lilamrta*, Madhava Patnaik has described this episode in a very interesting manner, as described earlier.

The commands of Gajapati emperor Prataprudra Deva embodied in the inscription are

engraved on the temple wall in old Oriya script and style as follows :

"Vira sri gajapati gaudesvara navakoti karnata kalavargesvara birabara sri Prataprudra maharajankara samsta 4 anka srahi kakada su 10 budhabare abadharita agyan pramane Bada thakuranka sri Gitagovinda thakuranka bhogabele e nata hoiba. Sanjhadhupa Sarilatharu e nata hoiba. Badathakura samparada Kapilesvara thakuranka bandha nachunimane puruna samparada telengi samparada emane savihen badathakuranka Gitagovindahun ana gita na sikhibe. Ana gita na gaibe ana gita hoi paramesvaranka chhamure na haba. E nata bitarake Vaisnava gaana charijana achhanti, emane Gitagovinda gitahi gaibe. Ehankatharu asiksita mane ekasvarare suni Gitagovinda gitahin sikhibe. Ana gita na sikhibe. Eha je pariksa ana gita nata karaile jani se Jagannathanka droha karai"- (Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal -Vol. LXII, 1893, pp 96-97, quoted in Sri Jayadeva O Sri Gitagovinda, pp 89.

The meaning of the above inscription is as follows :

1. At the time of every offering of Bhoga, and from evening worship till the Badasinghara at night, only the Gitagovinda is to be recited accompanied by dance before the Lords.
2. The followers of Lord Balabhadra, the permanent dancing girls engaged by king Kapilesvar Deva, the old followers shall not learn or sing anything other than the Gitagovinda, and at the time of dance before the sanctum sanctorum of Lord Jagannath, no song other than the Gitagovinda would be sung.
3. Besides these four units of singers and dancers, four *Vaisnava* singers specially appointed would only sing the Gitagovinda. They

shall train the illiterate devotees to sing the Gitagovinda only and no other scripture.

4. Any sevak who disobeys this and allows singing from any scripture other than the Gitagovinda or permit with any other song to accompany a dance shall be treated as a sinner against Lord Jagannath.

This announcement dates back to the 10th day of the lunar fortnight of the month of *Kakada* in the 4th regnal year of Gajapati emperor Prataprudra Deva which was a Wednesday. According to astrological calculation this was the 10th day of the lunar fortnight of *Asadha* that is the 6th July, 1500 A.D. It was the day of celebration of Bahudayatra of Lord Jagannath.

This stone inscription may be attributed to the following causes :

1. Some men of higher rank engaged in the daily service of the Gitagovinda or some learned pandits or revered saints might have attempted to substitute the Gitagovinda with their own writings. Such an attempt must have caused great provocation to the sevak community who might have revolted to safeguard the sacred tradition of the srimandira service. This might be the reason of issue of royal commands by the Gajapati emperor Prataprudra Deva during his reign.
2. It is also possible that the singing of the Gitagovinda of Jayadeva which had been in vogue for generations was discontinued for some reason or other in worship of Lord Jagannath and the inscription was meant for reintroducing the same. The fact that such reintroduction was made in 1500 AD makes it clear that it was not due to Sri Chaitanya's advent in Orissa. A set of historians presumed earlier that revival of Vaishnavism and popularity of Gita Govinda after Sri Chaitanya's

visit compelled Shri Pratap Rudra Dev to issue the royaledict. There cannot be a worse distortion of history than the concept that Radha was introduced to Orissa by Sri Chaitanya.

3. The withdrawal of the Gitagovinda of Jayadeva for sometime and introduction of the Abhinava Gitagovinda had caused a lot of dissatisfaction in the temple. In order that such adventures should not be repeated, the stone inscription was issued.

4. There is a fascinating legend prevalent in Orissa regarding this incident. It is said that the palm leaf scripture of the Gitagovinda by Jayadeva and the Abhinava Gitagovinda by the king were placed in the sanctum of Lord Jagannatha and the door of the shrine was bolted. The next morning on reopening the door, it was found that the Gitagovinda of Jayadeva was on the throne whereas the Abhinava Gitagovinda had fallen off. The pride of the king was thus curbed and while singing the glory of the Gitagovinda of Jayadeva, he reintroduced it in the daily service of the Lord. This legend finds place in the book Vaisnava Lilamrta by Madhava Patnaik.

The above discourses bear ample testimony to the fact that in the history of Srimandira no deviation whatsoever from the established traditional rituals has been recorded. The sevak community did not meekly submit to nor did blindly accept out of fear any arbitration of the Gajapati emperor if that was not in conformity with the age-old convention of Srimandira

The poet Madhava Patnaik, in the Vaisnava Lilamrta, has given some personal indications at the beginning of his work from which it is learnt that he had completed the book in 1535-36 A.D. i.e. during the 48th regnal year of Gajapati emperor Prataprudra Deva. From this scripture

it is known that he had the privilege of associating himself with Srichaitanya. It was in Puri that in 1533 A.D. Srichaitanya breathed his last. During long 18 years of his stay in Puri, Madhava Patnaik had become a favourite of Srichaitanya Deva.

The Vaisnava Lilamrta contains nine chapters only. In these chapters he has mentioned the names of many holymen, saints and kings not only of his own time but also of an earlier period. Among them appear saints like Sridhar Svami, Madhavendra Puri, Isvar Puri, Raghavendra Puri, Kabir, Guru Nanak and kings like Chodaganga Deva (1078-1147 A.D.), Kamarnava Deva (1147-1168 A.D.), Bhima Deva (1211-1238 A.D.), Bhanu Deva (1352-1378 A.D.), Kapilendra Deva (1435-1467 A.D.), Purosottam Deva (1467-1497 A.D.) and Prataprudra Deva (1497-1535 A.D.).

It is learnt from the scripture the *Prapannamrta* (Chapters 35 and 36) written by Anantacharya that Chodaganga Deva had introduced *nama sankirtana* (singing of God's name) in Srimandira. Ramanuja had transformed him from '*Parama Mahesvara*' (great devotee of Siva) to '*Parama Vaisnava*' (great devotee of Visnu) as depicted in Korny copper plate of Chodaganga (vide JAHRS-vol-IV, p-113). After Chodaganga, his eldest son Kamarnava Deva ascended the throne as recorded by the poet Madhava Patnaik in his scripture. It is learnt from the Madala Panji that Kamarnava Deva did not take a morsel of food or a drop of water without listening first to the sacred verses of the Gitagovinda (Madala Panji, Prachi Edition, 1940, p-36).

The Vaisnava Lilamrta of the poet Madhava Patnaik records that the devadasi dance was already in vogue in Srimandira which was

further developed in the reign of Kamarnava Deva. The Devadasi dance has been mentioned as Rahasa dance.

*"Nachuni mahari jogaila,
Nata hoila hari lila.
Maharimane nrtya kale,
Rahasa nrtya e boile."*

(Vaisnava Lilamrta, Ch.-II)

The tradition of Rahasa dance and nama sankirtana had its beginning since the reign of Chodaganga Deva. It is said that Chodaganga Deva celebrated the coronation of his son Kamarnava Deva on the day of inauguration of the inner chamber of Srimandira. Ananga Bhimadeva, described as Bhimadeva in the book started the Gitagovinda seva.

*"Gitagovinda nata sabha,
Mandire pratyaha hoila.
Raja se seva bhiaila,
Kenduli sadhi jogaila.
Sri Gitagovinda rasa e
Srijagannathara priya e.
Boli kalaka e bhiana
Bhagate hele tosamana.
Gitagovinda nata puna
Nata mandira kala bhiana.
Rahasa nrtyara nimitta
Gitagovinda kale nrtya.
Bhimadevara e kirati
Kale se gala kirti thapi."*

(Vaisnava Lilamrta, Ch.-II)

Meaning:- Gitagovinda dance and music as a Seva got performed daily in the temple. The king introduced this Seva and provided *Kenduli saree* to the Lord. This Seva was very dear to Lord Jagannath. A dance hall (*Nata Mandir*) was constructed by the king for the performance of Gitagovinda music and dance. Gitagovinda dance was introduced as Rahas Nrtya. Introduction of

this Seva and construction of Nata Mandir made Bhima Deva, a name to remember for ages.

It has been mentioned in the Vaisnava Lilamrta that before the coronation of Bhima Deva, Jayadeva had passed away at Puri. Bhima Deva of the Vaisnava Lilamrta may be either emperor Aniyanka Bhima Deva (1190-1198 A.D.) or Ananga Bhima Deva of Ganga dynasty, who ruled from 1211-1238 A.D. The possibility of his being the earlier Anyanka Bhimadeva (1190-1198 A.D.) is more because Chand Bardai of the durbar of Prithviraj Chowhan of Delhi had mentioned about Jayadeva and Gitagovinda in his book Prthviraj Rasa much before 1192 A.D., the year of death of Prithiviraj and fall of the last Hindu king of Delhi.

According to the Vaisnava Lilamrta, Bhima Deva, at the request of the Sevakas, had built the Natamandira for recital of the Gitagovinda. Of course it was about three centuries after the introduction of the Gitagovinda in the temple worship that the poet Madhava Patnaik composed the Vaisnava Lilamrta. If it is taken that Jayadeva was living at that time, he must have received royal recognition and patronage. In the words of Madhava Patnaik :

*"Vipra se Jayadeve nama
Ksetrabaraku agamana.
Kenduli sasana ta grama
Prachi nadire tate puna.
Niali Madhava samipe
Bhagati kala nana rupe.
Sastra purane vichaksna
Kavitva marge tara mana.
Gita se rachivi boila
Ksetravaraku mana dela.
Sri Jagannathara samipe
Suddha satvika mati bhave."*

(Vaisnava Lilamrta, Ch. - II)

Meaning:- Jayadeva, a Brahmin by caste, came to Puri (Sriksetra). He belonged to Kenduli Sasana on the bank of the river Prachi. He worshipped Madhava at Niali. He was a very talented person in the scripture and took to writing poetry. He wrote the Gitagovinda at Sriksetra in the temple of Lord Jagannath. While writing about the life of Jayadeva, he has mentioned about the composition of the Gitagovinda in Srimandira in front of Lord Jagannath. Madhav Patnaik has gone on to further describe as follows:-

Padmavati was adept in Rahasa dance and was dancing to the sweet and immortal verses of the Gitagovinda. The melodious recital of the verses of the Gitagovinda through the voice of Jayadeva accompanied by the elegant dance of Padmavati fascinated the hearts and soul of the devotees. As a result of this, singing of the Gitagovinda and display of this dance were codified by the then king in the daily ritual services of Srimandira.

It is a custom to cover the body of the Lord at the time of the Badasinghara with a scarf containing the verses of the Gitagovinda woven into it. These scarfs or sarees were brought especially from the weavers of Kenduli on the Prachi river. Now these sarees are made in a village Nuapatna in Tigiria Block of Cuttack district. This seva has been continuing since then in the services of Lord Jagannath. After calling of the identified neem tree for *navakalevara* of three deities, the logs are usually brought to the temple of Jagannath by covering them with the Gitagovinda *khandua* through huge man-drawn carts. The clothes prepared by the weavers of Kenduli called Kenduli saree was very famous at that time according to the scripture *Kanchanalata* of the 17th century A.D.

"Sahaje dvija nandini tejodhama kanaka kanti
Kala Kenduli sadhi bhidi pindhichhi motidanti"

The poet Bhupati Pandit of 17th century A.D. had composed the scripture *Prema Panchamrta* dedicated to Lord Krsna. It has been calculated that this scripture was completed by 29th January, 1694 wherein there has been a mention of the dance of Devadasis accompanied by singing of the Gitagovinda.

"Sri Jayadeva kavikrta
Gayani gaile basanta.
Bina mrdanga tala nade
Nachuni nachanti anande.
E rupe sanamana kari
Ta pachhe karana pachari."

(*Prema Panchamrta*, Ch III, Prachi Edition, p. 94)

Seikh Subhodaya and Jayadeva

The Gita Govinda by Sri Jayadeva was regularly sung and danced in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri as part of the Lord's nocturnal liturgy. The Seva has started from the days of Jayadeva during the period of Kamarnava Deva, son of Ganga emperor Chodaganga Deva. Suryavansi Gajapati Pratap Rudra Deva promulgated an order through a temple inscription, dt. 8.7.1500 which ordained that the singing of Gita Govinda would henceforward be a compulsory daily ritual in the temple for which the king even appointed singers and dancers for the purpose as mentioned by historian Kedarnath Mohapatra.

As mentioned by Sri Nilamadhav Panigrahi, an eminent musicologist, the Gita Govinda "surpasses all other preceding works of the great master poets by dint of its lyricality, both from the view points of inspiration and expression, if not by its poetic greatness." But by its "three dimensional appeal of music, poetry and mystic

spiritual content it has earned unsurpassed popularity tantamount to adoration” as mentioned by Kedarnath Mahapatra, an eminent historian.

Its popularity has led to controversies in the last century regarding the birth place of poet Jayadeva. As clearly said by Devi Prasad Das - "The Gita Govinda which has created a worldwide sensation in the field of the art and literature of the country is believed to be the product of Jayadeva and Padmavati in Jagannath temple of Puri where its recital is an important ritual since several centuries."

The controversy regarding the nativity of Jayadeva, according to Late Pandit Nilamani Mishra is hardly one hundred year old. After Orissa had lost its identity towards the beginning of the 19th century, its social and cultural life was vitiated by a number of economic and political factors. Therefore, its cultural materials were wrongly used by the scholars from outside. These types of cheap controversies gained ground as a result of such uses. A story in *Seikh Subhodaya* is cited as evidence of Jayadeva belonging to the Court of Laxman Sena.

Seikh Subhodaya is actually a recent work but it is said to be a work of the 2nd half of 16th century AD. It was edited by Dr. Sukumar Sen and published by Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1963. It is narrated in this book that Budhan Misra, the court singer of Kapilendra Deva Gajapati of Orissa went to the court of Laxmana Sena of Bengal and he had challenged Jayadeva. This does not hold historically because Kapilendra Deva and Laxman Sen are not contemporaneous to each other. While Laxmana Sen ruled from 1170 to 1250 AD, Kapilendra Deva belonged to the 15th Century AD.

This book narrates fanciful stories about Umapati Dhara, Govardhana Acharya, Dhoyi and

Jayadeva, all of whom are mentioned in the *Gita Govinda*. The story on Jayadeva is as follows -

A certain Brahmin called Budhan Mishra appeared in the assembly hall of Raja Laxmana Sen and claimed that he had attained great heights in composition of music, for which he had been honoured by Gajapati Kapilendra Deva of Utkal. He had obtained a "Writ of Victory" from Gajapati of Utkala. He then started singing in Patta Manjari Raga and all the leaves of a nearby Aswastha tree fell down. All the courtiers started praising Budhan Mishra. The King decided to honour him with a Writ of Victory. It may be mentioned here that Patta Manjari is not known to be an established Raga. It is difficult also to believe that King Laxmana Sen was holding his open assembly (durbar) under a Aswastha Tree on the shore of river Ganga.

Just at that time Padmavati, wife of Jayadeva was coming back from her bath in river Ganga. Hearing sounds of joy in the royal court, she entered the hall and announced that "Unless anyone defeats her in music in a competition, no one should be awarded a Writ of Victory."

Seikh, a Muslim saint was present in the king's court. He asked Padmavati to sing a song and create some miracle. Padmavati started singing a melodious song in Gandharva Raga. All boats floating in the river came back on their own to the shore. All courtiers were amazed.

Budhan Mishra was reluctant to enter into a contest with a woman. Seikh ordered that Padmavati's husband Jayadeva be called to the royal court. Jayadeva came to the Court. Seikh told Budhan Mishra to sing so that new leaves came out in the Aswastha tree. Budhan Mishra expressed his inability to sing like that.

Poet Jayadeva then started singing in Basanta Raga and immediately new leaves started

sprouting in the Aswastha tree which had lost all leaves earlier. As ordered by the Seikh no Writ of Victory was given to Budhan Mishra. He was only given some small gifts and asked to leave the court.

Since the name of Kapilendra Deva was mentioned in this story, the book obviously has been written during or after the 16th century, describing events during the rule of Laxmana Sen in the 12th century A.D. Famous historian Dr. Rakhal Das Banerjee has written about this book as follows, "The book does not contain a single passage which may be taken as historically accurate."

According to Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee "Although it is a forgery, its date certainly is not later than the 16th century and is sufficiently old for it to retain its importance as a valuable work on early Bengali history and culture." This has been quoted by Dr. Prasanta Kumar Dasgupta in his book 'Jayadeva and his Contemporaries' at pages 99 to 100.

Dr. Sukumar Sen has written that though this book does not contain any historical event, in some of the myths one can notice some historical evidence.

According to Dr. Bhagaban Panda, this book as its very title indicates, was written to celebrate the auspicious coming of a Muslim Pir (saint) to a country which first knew Islam, where he was highly honoured. All prominence was given to the Seikh and, Laxmana Sen and his ministers have been described as thieves, corrupt and lusty.

Shri Jayadeva and Padmavati were great devotees of Sri Krishna and had no lust for wealth. It can never be imagined that they appear in a humiliating manner and sang in the Court of Laxmana Sen competing with one Budhan Mishra and receiving presents of a pair of golden earrings

and a pair of bracelets. The book which was written to sing the glory of a Muslim saint and had credited all the traditional glories of Laxmana Sen to the Muslim saint cannot be cited as an evidence to establish the connection of Jayadeva with the Court of Laxmana Sen.

It is really strange as to how scholars of Bengal have accepted all the insults heaped on Laxmana Sen, his queen, Umapati Dhar and Kaviraj Dhoyi by the Seikh. Dhoyi has been described in this book as an illiterate man coming to possess divine gift of high poetry. The King had been described as being jealous of Umapati Dhar and competing with him for the company of prostitutes. The queen of Laxmana Sen is narrated to have assaulted Madhavi, the daughter-in-law of a merchant at the bathing ghat and that she snatched away the bangles from her wrist. The two earrings worn by the husband of Madhavi were forcibly taken away by the servants of the queen as per her order. On hearing the story of complaint from Madhavi and her husband, the Seikh brought the king and his wife to a trial in his court. The queen was found herself wearing the snatched bracelets of Madhavi, and her son was found wearing the earrings of Madhavi's husband. Laxmana Sen, it is described in the book, had to bear all the insults with his face down cast. What compelled Laxmana Sena before his defeat in the hands of Muhammad Bakhiyar to be so subservient to the Seikh is not known. Had Laxmana Sen ruled as a vassal king under an Islam Nawab, he would perhaps become subservient to a Muslim Pir. But history records that Laxmana Sen escaped after defeat and came with a few followers to Puri and sought refuge under the Ganga emperor Raja Raja Deva.

Such is the book "Seikh Subhodaya" whose stories are paraded to provide "historical" evidence of saint poet Jayadeva's association with

the Court of Laxmana Sen and his birthplace in Bengal.

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5. Alochana - Pandit Nilamani Misra.

The Five Jewels of Laxmana Sena

Jayadeva was one of the greatest poets of India and an unrivalled master of erotic religious lyrical poetry. The poet himself abstained from mentioning anything about his birth place except that he was born at a place called Kenduvilwa. As Dr. N.S.R. Ayengar has said "The ancient Indian Poets never recorded anything about their age, place of birth and time. This, one feels, was partly because of their modesty and partly because they perhaps never thought it worthwhile, since they never had such narrow, parochial attitude of life. Perhaps they considered themselves as sons of India writing in the best of Indian languages-Sanskrit." We are proud of them as they are to the exclusion of their provincial identities. But distortions of history need critical scrutiny.

One of the hypothesis on which the whole superstructure of the arguments in favour of the birth place of poet Jayadeva's being in Bengal is that a stone or wooden slab bearing the names of Govardhana, Sarana, Jayadeva, Umapati and Dhoyi was said to have been fixed on the wall of Laxmana Sena's assembly hall. This was discovered by two Vaishnava saints Rupa and Sanatana in the first part of sixteenth century.

The discovered verse is quoted below
 "Govardhanasca Sarano Jayadeva Umapatih.
 Kavirajasca Ratnani Samitau
 Laksmanasyaca.

Shri Harekrishna Mukhopadhyaya in his book *Birbhum Vivarana* has mentioned that Shri Rupa and Sri Sanatana had seen this sloka inscribed in the assembly hall of Laxmana Sena at Shridhama Navadwipa. Laxmana Sena's rule in a part of Bengal had come to an end in the year 1205 A.D. when Mohammad-i-Bhaktiyar had occupied his capital and he had fled to Puri, taken refuge in Orissa, where a powerful Hindu Gajapati King of the Ganga dynasty was ruling at that time. The report of this discovery by the two Goswamis comes to us after four more centuries. According to Prof. Dr. Banamali Ratha, this verse lacked authenticity of any kind and it has been accepted by the scholars as a spurious one or a hearsay.

According to Prof. Thomas E Donaldson there is no contemporary epigraphic or literary evidence to prove that Nadiya was ever the capital of Laxmana Sena or his forefather and successors. The grants of land and villages by the Sena Kings were always issued from Vikramapura or in the case of the later ones from Dharyagrama and Phalgugrama. No Sanskrit work written during the Sena period mentions Nadiya as the capital of Laxmana Sena.

In *Pavanadutam*, Dhoyi has called the capital of Sena Kings as Vijayapura. Only Tabaquet-i-Nasiri written in 1260 A.D., fifty five years after the collapse of the Sena rule in Nadiya, mentions Nadiya as the seat of Sena's Government. This book Tabaquat is not a historical creation as it has given Laxmana Sena a rule of eighty years and narrates fanciful stories about his birth and about the destruction of Nadiya.

Mohammad-i-Bhaktiyar destroyed thoroughly the city of Nadiya (or whichever was the capital of Laxmana Sena) and left it in total ruins. There was no trace of the palace standing. The verse was supposedly discovered in one of the gates some three hundred years later by the two Goswamis, Rupa and Sanatana.

According to Kendarnath Mohapatra a noted historian, "The story of the connection of the five poets with Sidhama Navadwipa originated and perhaps was circulated in the post-Chaitanya period when Nadiya came to prominence due to the birth of the great reformer Sri Chaitanya in that holy place. There is little evidence, literary or archaeological that the Gita Govinda was popular in Bengal in the period prior to the advent of Sri Chaitanya. In fact Sri Chaitanya first discovered the jewel of Gita Govinda when he visited Puri in 1509 A.D and came to realise the religious significance of the work from Raya Ramananda, Gajapati's administrator of Rajamohendri on the banks of the Godavari when he went on pilgrimage to the south.

According to Dr. Bhagaban Panda the verse is written in very poor Sanskrit and is a spurious one like the famous traditional verse cited describing the nine jewels of the court of Vikramaditya, also called Chandragupta-II.

The entrance of the Assembly Hall of Laxmana Sena could not have existed till the time of Rupa and Sanatan Goswami. Dense vegetation must have covered the ruins of this palace during these three hundred years. The two great Goswamis nowhere in their numerous works have mentioned anything about this so called discovery of the inscription. Their biographies never mention this discovery. Neither the contemporaries of Sri Chaitanya who came from Nadiya nor Sri Chaitanya himself ever mentioned anything about Laxmana Sena once ruling over Navadwipa or

about any historical ruins of his palace. No Vaishnava literature written after Sri Chaitanya has ever mentioned about this grand discovery by the two Goswamis.

This verse was most probably composed by some Pandit of poor competence in Sanskrit in the first part of 20th century on the basis of the verse "*Vacha Pallavayati*" which itself was a "*Prakhipta*" (Interpolated) sloka of Gita Govinda, mentioned the four poets Dhoyi, Umapati, Dhara, Sarana and Govardhana Acharya.

To quote Dr. Bhagaban Panda, the names of these two learned Goswamis were cleverly associated with the discovery of this so called verse in Nabadwipa in order to give an air of antiquity and gain the confidence of the people. So the story of seeing this inscription on the entrance of Laxman Sena's assembly hall at Nadiya is simply imaginary and as such unacceptable.

Nowhere in the history of India or anywhere else in the world the names of court poets are inscribed on stone or wooden slabs fixed at the entrance of a *darbar* (assembly hall).

Pandit Ramakanta Tripathy in the year 1935 edited and published in Calcutta the famous book of Govardhan Acharya called "*Arya Saptasati*". In the introduction to this book Sri Tripathy has written that this sloka "*Laxmanasya Pancharatna*" was found quoted in the book Raja Tarangini written by the famous Kashmiri Poet Kallahana. Kallahana had written Raja Tarangini in 1148 A.D. Laxmana Sena ruled a part of Bengal from 1170 to 1205 A.D. How could Kallahana know either about the five poets or about Laxmana Sena in 1148? This question has been asked by learned scholar M. Winternitz. Therefore Pandit Tripathy has told a white lie

when he said that this *sloka* was quoted in Raja Tarangini by Kallahana.

Thus it is established that Pandit Ramakanta Tripathy like Harekrishna Mukhopadhyaya was creating false evidence in support of the theory that Jayadeva belonged to the Court of Laxmana Sena of Bengal.

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The Interpolated Stanza of Gitagovinda

In the second stanza of *Sri Gitagovinda* Jayadeva invokes the Goddess of Speech, Saraswati to come to his aid in writing the poem which will depict the love frolic of Radha and Krishna. Jayadeva also introduces his wife Padmavati who danced to the tunes of his composition in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. Padmavati incidentally was a celebrated dancer in her own right as can be seen in the stone inscriptions in two temples of South India. The book was written in the Lord Jagannath Temple of Puri.

The fourth stanza, according to Dr. N.S.R. Ayengar, lends insight into what kind of readers Jayadeva was writing for only those whose hearts are sweetened and enriched remembering Hari and those who are curious about the art of divine luxurious enjoyment, should read Jayadeva who is writing the poem, couched in sweet, tender and lilting lyrical language.

The third stanza starting with the following words however, is intriguing.

*Vacah pallavayatyumpathidharah
Sandarbha Suddhim Giram;*

According to Dr. Satyanarayan Rajguru and Dr. N.S.R. Ayengar it is an obvious interpolation and, therefore, contentious. It serves very little purpose in the poem. To quote Dr. Ayengar "In its tune, texture, content and diction, it does not fit into the architectonic of the poem. It creates a jarring note which is very uncharacteristic of Jayadeva. After the invocation and the proposal in the second stanza, the third one seems utterly out of context."

As translated by Prof. Barbara Stoler Miller, the stanza reads as follows -

"Umapathidhara is prodigal with speech, Saran is renowned for his subtle flowing sounds. But only Jayadeva divines the pure design of words. Dhoyi is famed as a kind of poets for his musical ear. But no one rivals poet Govardhana for poems of erotic mood and sacred truth."

Both Dr. Rajguru and Dr. Ayengar are of the opinion that this stanza could never have been there where it is now for it rends the total texture of the poem. It is a later interpolation into the poem by some commentator, perhaps with some ulterior motive. First of all it is not harmoniously fused into the body of Jayadeva's poem and secondly it does not exhibit the felicity of the diction which is so characteristic of Jayadeva's style. The thought contents are also quite out of context.

In this stanza are mentioned the names of four poets, Umapathidhara, Sarana, Acharya Govardhana and Dhoyi. The stanza has five different things to say about each of the five poets. Umapathidhara is known for his free flowing speech. Sarana is known for his subtle sounds. Dhoyi, the king of poets is known for his music. Jayadeva is known for his felicity of diction and

Acharya Govardhana remains the unrivalled master of erotic art.

Two different meanings have been read into the stanza. One view which was held by Late Kedarnath Mahapatra was that Jayadeva had only established his superiority over four other contemporary poets and not the superiority of Govardhana Acharya over the rest four. He has based this interpretation on the book *Sarvanga Sundari Tika* by Narayana Das.

The other and more widely acceptable meaning is that the stanza was written to clearly establish the superiority of Govardhana Acharya over the rest of the poets including Jayadeva himself. It appears highly improbable that Jayadeva in his own words would denigrate his own status.

Whichever meaning one accepts, nothing has been said in it on the association of either Jayadeva or any one of these poets to have belonged to the court of Laxmana Sen.

Dr. Satyanarayan Rajguru has developed and established a hypothesis that this stanza was composed by Udayana, younger brother of Govardhana and he perhaps interpolated it into *Gita Govinda* in his *Bhava Bivatrika Tika*. This was perhaps done deliberately so that *Arya Saptasati* compiled by Govardhana Acharya with assistance from Balabhadra and Udayana, his two brothers, got a better introduction and circulation. Sovoneswara temple in Niali and Megheswar temple contain two stone inscriptions where compositions of Udayana appear and have been preserved till today. The three brothers belonged to Niali in Cuttack district. Rana Kumbha in his *Rasika Priya Tika* has clearly declared this stanza to be an interpolation.

Arya Saptasati contained only a very few stanzas of *Shringara Rasa*. It is highly unlikely

that Govardhana could be the model in this regard for Jayadeva to emulate. Jayadeva had before him the great models of Kalidasa, Bhatrihari, Sriharsha and Bhababhuti. Jayadeva could have paid tributes to these luminaries rather than to Govardhana Acharya describing him as the best exponent of *Sringara Rasa*. Though Acharya Govardhana was a later contemporary of Jayadeva, he composed *Arya Saptasati* much after the writing of *Gita Govinda*.

What poetry did Umapatidharah and Saran write is not known to posterity. Obviously this Umapathidhara is not the poet Umapati of 13th century of Orissa who was an Army General and a poet in one of the Ganga king's court. Umapatidhara perhaps served in the courts of two or three Sena kings Vijaya Sena, Vallala Sena and Laxman Sena. Even if this is true, what he wrote is not known as is the case with Sarana.

Dhoyi had written the *Pavanaduta Kavya* which is an imitation of *Meghaduta* by Kalidasa. Dr. Rajguru has placed the period of composition to the time of Vijaya Sena (1072-1119) because Dhoyi had urged the wind messenger to touch Kalinga Nagari on his way as it was the capital of Kalinga. Emperor Chologanga Deva had shifted his capital from Kalinganagar to Varanasi Kataka on Mahanadi in 1112 A.D. Dhoyi who wrote before 1112 A.D. was not alive up to the reign of Laksmana Sena.

Jayadeva was the contemporary of Vallala Sena, father of Laksmana Sena (1119-1169). The time of composition of *Gita Govinda* is in between 1146 to 1150, as calculated by Dr. Rajguru. Thus there is no question of all these poets working as court poets of Laksmana Sena.

Scholars who are bent on proving that Jayadeva belonged to Bengal depend squarely on this 3rd stanza. They take it for granted that

Dhoyi, Sarana, Umapatidhara and Govardhana Acharya were court poets of Laksmana Sena and jump to the conclusion that Jayadeva also was there as he mentioned them in the 3rd stanza in *Gita Govinda*. First of all the premises is wrong and conclusion based on that obviously is wrong. None of these five poets in their works has ever mentioned the name of Laksmana Sena.

Those scholars who maintain that the words "*Senakulatilaka Bhupatireko Raja Pradosacha*" in sloka number 39 of *Arya Saptasati* by Govardhana Acharya refers to Laksmana Sena are sadly mistaken. *Arya Saptasati* is mostly a Sanskrit translation of '*Satta Sai*' composed by Mahakavi Hala in Prakrit in 3rd century A.D. In the '*Satta Sai*' also the words *Senakulatilaka Bhupati* appear. Obviously 17th descendant of Satavahana dynasty Sri Halo belonging to 3rd century A.D. could not have referred to Laksmana Sena of 12th Century Bengal. He had referred to Maharaja Pravara Sena II belonging to Vakataka dynasty which ruled over Deccan. R.G. Bhadarkar in his book 'Early History of Deccan' has determined the period of Hala in 3rd century A.D.

A commentator of *Arya Saptasati* belonging to Maharashtra has clearly mentioned that this *Senakulatilaka* referred to a king named Pravara Sena as "*Tilaka Bhupati Setu Kara Prabara Sena Name Raja - Purnamasi*

Pradosheka Prabhut." This commentary is published in "Choukhamba Sanskrit Series." The words *Senakulatilaka* therefore do not stand for Laxmana Sena at all. There is no indication in the writings of Govardhana Acharya about any Sena ruler other than these words. So it is not true that Govardhana Acharya belonged to the court of Laksmana Sena. Had that been so, Sridhara Das who actually belonged to the court of Laksmana Sena would have quoted from the book by Govardhana in his own works.

Research by Dr. Satyanarayan Rajguru has demolished the entire edifice built around this interpolated 3rd stanza in *Gita Govinda* to establish Jayadeva as a court poet of Laksmana Sena and therefore belonging to Bengal. It has also established that Govardhana Acharya belonged to Niali in Cuttack district in Orissa and was never a court poet of Laksmana Sena.

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4. *Jayadeva and Gita Govinda in the Tradition of Orissa* - Dr. Pathi, Dr. Panda & Dr. Rath.
5. *Alochana* - Pandit Nilamani Misra.

The widely acclaimed lyrical composition of Gita Govinda of Sri Jayadev, the 12th Century A.D. saint poet, has been a powerful influence on several genres of creative and performing arts in various parts of India. It is perhaps the most lyrical Sanskrit composition of the medieval era.

A book titled, *The Gitagovinda of Sri Jayadev* is authored by Sri Ajit Kumar Tripathy and Shri P.C. Tripathy. Shri Ajit Kumar Tripathy is a senior bureaucrat, columnist and author of several books in Oriya. This book highlights the living traditions of Gita Govinda in present day Orissa, besides giving a host of historical and cultural references on the life and times of the saint poet in and around the Temple City of Puri and his claimed native place nearby. This book is published by the Publication Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India.

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CONTENTS

Miracles in the Life of Sri Jayadeva	<i>Somanath Jena</i>	...	1
The Philosophy of the Gitagovinda	<i>Prafulla Chandra Tripathy</i>	...	4
Gitagovinda and Oriya Art Tradition	<i>Nimai Charan Mohanty</i>	...	15
The Story and History of Odissi Dance and Sri Geeta Govinda	<i>Dr. Jasobanta Narayan Dhar</i>	...	17
Jayadeva - The Celebrated Saint Poet of Orissa	<i>Indu Bhusan Kar</i>	...	20
Depiction of Tangible and Intangible Elements of Nature in Gita Govinda Kavyam	<i>Gadadhar Mohapatra</i>	...	22
Jayadev : The Poet of Orissa	<i>Dr. K.C.Mishra</i>	...	28
Other Works of Shri Jayadeva	<i>Arun Kumar Upadhyay</i>	...	30
Sri Jayadeva and Gita Govinda	<i>Dr. C.B. Patel</i>	...	33
Jagannath Culture as Reflected in Gita Govinda	<i>Dr. B.L. Malla</i>	...	36
Poet Jayadev Belongs to Orissa	<i>Tarakanta Mohanty</i>	...	39
New Light on Saint Poet Sri Jayadev and Gitagovinda	<i>Ajit Kumar Tripathy</i>	...	41