

# STHĀNESWARA TEMPLE INSCRIPTION- MANJURI OF THE TIME OF GAJAPATI PURUSOTTAM DEVA OF BHOI DYNASTY

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The Sthāneswara Siva temple is situated in the village Manjuri, a revenue village under Bhandaripokhari police station of Bhadrak district. The place is approachable from Chatābara chhak on the National Highway No.5 Southwards at a distance of nearly twenty kilometers from Bhadrak towards Cuttack. Moreover one can touch the place from Jājpur town walking five kilometers towards the north across the river Vaitarani near Balighāi. The temple of Lord Sthāneswara is a rebuilt one and the stone blocks of the ruined ancient temple are scattered around and some of them have been used for the steps of the adjacent tank. Certain sculptures of the 10th-11th Century A.D. are stuck to the temple which provide an evidence that the original temple was built during the Somavamsi rule in Orissa.

A detached blue chlorite stone slab is kept inclined to the northern wall of the temple. Two separate inscriptions are engraved with a slight difference in their purport, on the both sides of the Slab. Both the inscriptions are weather beaten. As certain portions have been defaced on account of regular displacement of the Slab, the letters are illegible. Most of the letters have gone out of recognition. The single chlorite among other Baulamālia Stone blocks seems to have been set somewhere to the temple for the sole purpose of inscription only. The Stone block containing the inscription measures 75 cm in length, 37 cm in breadth with a thickness of 25 cm. One side of the Slab contains twenty lines while the other side displays twenty two lines and both of them differ in their content though the donor is the one and the same person. The language of the inscription is oriya and the script used is also the same.

## **Text - 1st Side**

1. Bīra Sri Gajabājiraje Su (Swa) ra Nabakotikarnāta kala
2. baragesu (swara) Sri purusottamadeba Māhārājā bije bijaye
3. Subharājia samasta 8 Anka srāhi Māgha di 30 na su 10 Sukra
4. bāre sri Māhārājā Mānasingha ujiri amale Manjuri Jā
5. giridāra Jayemaladiu Mādhe(Va)nka deula Mandepatolā
6. ilaru pandita dakāi debatānka bhoga ra(1a)gāila,

7. 14 hāthi nalare Manjuri dakhina bilara solamāni-
8. ā bhedira Māruā bhedira bhui Ba 10/
9. 10 dasamānaka(ku)māpa jāgā 0' Beitirā bhedir gāo
10. santarāgadiā Maidhakari datta Bā 2/10na gaoghara
11. bilara Bā 1/16na gāe Bā14/16na maidhe Thanesu(swa)
12. ra debanka bhogaku bhui Bā4/12 sebaka bhoge di
13. ghira Mā12 suāra māli pramānika samparadādiga-
14. ra ja10 naku bhui Bā2/7na datta Mā10 mālisankhuā
15. Mā2/diudiā mā5/banacerā Mā1/12 1/2 Būlāi mā
16. hānti tahaliāku Ma6/Mandapasuā Mā 8/12 1/2
17. e bhui āebae karuthiba Mādhe(ba)nkara sebākaru
18. thiba ehāje hariba hithu(ndu)hoijebe haraigāi
19. khāi Musalamāna harai
20. Suāra khāi.

**Translation:-**

On Friday the tenth of the bright fortnight and the 30th day of the month of Māgha, samasta Anka year 8 in the victorious reign of the Māhārājā sri Purusottamadeva of great prowess, the hero, the illustrious lord of elephants and horses, the lord of Gauda, the lord of Nabakoti Karnāta and Kalabarga(Gulburgā) while he reigned in his prosperous Kingdom and during the tenure of sri Māhārājā Mānasingha, the minister (subādar) Jaye-Maladeva, the Jagiridāra of Manjuri constructed the temple altar (an elevated structure or platform with a roof around the temple for worship) of lord Mahādeva and offered 'Bhoga' to the deity inviting the priest. Measurement of land was taken up by means of Nala(a measuring rod or unit) of 14 cubits long. Ten bātis(Bāti=a measure of land in orissa and south India. 1 Bāti=20 mānas or Acres) and ten Mānas (Acre) of land was measured as Māruā bhedi (Bhedi=fallow land) out of the solamāniā bhedi in the southern corn field of Manjuri. 2 Bāti 10 Mānas of land was granted named Beitirā bhedi out of the village santarāgadiā. 1 Bāti 16 mānas of land was granted out of the said village land making a total of 14 Bātis and 16 mānas which was allocated for the Bhoga (enjoyment) of Thāneswar(sthāneswara) deva, the lord Mahādeva. 4 Bātis and 12 mānas of land in which 12 māna belongs to dighī(big tank) out of which 2 bātis and 7 mānas of land was allocated for sevakas (attendants) like suāra(cook) Māli(flourist) pramānika(Milkman) etc. the group consisting of ten members. Moreover 10 mānas of land was granted to Māli(gardener) 2 mānas to sankhuā(Blower of conchshell) 5 mānas to Dihudiā(torchbearer) 1 māna 12 1/2 gunthas (1 Acre=25 gunthas) to Banacerā(keeper of the forest or grove) 6 mānas to the Tahaliā (kitchen helper) named Būlāi Māhānti, 8 mānas and 12 1/2 gunthas to Mandapa-suā(Night watchman on the altar). Ordered that they shall be earn and spend out of this land granted to them and rendering sincere service to the lord Mahādeva. Whoever takes away or misappropriates this (land) if he

takes away being a Hindu by religion must incur the sin of eating the cow (beef) and if he be a musalmān must incur the sin of eating the pig(pork).

**Text-2nd Side**

1. Bīra Sri Gajapati Gaudeswara Naba-
2. koti karnāta kalabarageswara sri pṛso
3. ttamadeba Māhārājā bije subha rāije sa-
4. masta 8 Anka Srāhi Māgha di 30 na su<sup>10</sup> su(kra) bāre-
5. Sri Māhārājā Mānasingha ujiri x x x sa Manjuri jā
6. gridāra Jaemaladiu mādhe(ba)nka deula Mandapa to
7. lāilāru panchāsa ti(da)pa ā(ra)ti lagāi debatānkabho-
8. ga ra(la)gāilaru x x x Manjuri dakhina bilare so-
9. la māniā bhedira x x x x x Bā 10/10
10. paraba ti(di)pa debāru Māruā bhedira Mā 10/8 Kanupa-
11. sa bhedira Mā6 x x x x x ra Mā6 / bhuidata
12. santarāgadiā x x x x ga x x x Māpa(ka) rila
13. Bhedira Ma x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x
14. ra x x x x x x x x x x suāra
15. Mā 13/8 bhui Mā12/8na banacerā Mā 3 Māli
16. Bā 1/bhui diudidiā mā8/Mandapasuā Mā 12/jo(ti)si
17. gāe samparadā dasajana Bā 15 Būlāi mā(hā)nti
18. tahaliā Mā10/12 1/2 sankhuā Mā4/e bhui āe
19. bae kari Thaneswara debanka susebā kariba
20. Hithu(ndu)harile gai khai Musalamāna hari
21. le harāma khai Je harai se janamai
22. Upara

**Translation:-**

On Friday, the tenth of the bright fortnight and the 30th day of the Month of Māgha Samasta Anka year 8 in the Victorious and prosperous reign of the Māhārājā Sri purusottama deba of great prowess, the hero, the illustrious lord of elephants, the lord of gauda, the lord of Nabakoti-Karnāta and Kalabarga and during the tenure of sri Māhārājā Mānasingha, the minister, Jayemala deva, the jāgirdar of Manjuri constructed the temple altar of Lord Mahādeva and kindling fifty lamps offered Bhoga to the deity. So on this occasion he granted 10 Bātis and 10 mānas of land out of the solamāniā bhedi of Manjuri. For kindling lamps in the temple during festivals land was granted out of Māruā bhedi, and kanupasa bhedi. The total land grant was 15 bāti to the sevaka group consisting of team members. From among the sevakas suāra was given Mā 13/8, Banacerā Mā12/8 Māli Mā3/ dihudīā Bā1/, Mandapasuā Mā8/, Jyotisi (Astrologer who speaks out the time in the temple) Mā12/. Over and above Būlāi Māhānti tahaliā

was given Mā10/12 1/2 and sankhuā got Mā4/. Ordered that they shall be earning and spending out of this land granted to them and rendering sincere service to Thāneswara deba.

If a Hindu by religion takes away or misappropriates (this land grant) he must eat the cow and if a Musalmān takes away he must eat the pig. One who misappropriates takes birth as spoken above.

### **Historical consideration:-**

The sthāneswara temple inscription is perhaps the fourth of its kind, the earlier three being the sarbamangalā temple inscription of Kesari<sup>(1)</sup>. The most important feature of the kesiāri inscriptions is that there is no mention of the name of Gajapati Purusottamdev instead the name of Mānasingha Māhārājā appears in the temple inscription and the name of sāh selim patishā (Jāhāngir and Rājā Kalyānmalla, the Mughal Subādar have been mentioned in the Nātamandira inscription. As the Anka year is only promulgated by the Gajapati kings of Orissa, the mention of Ankayear with Rājā Mānasingha, sāh selim patishā and Rājā kalyānmalla facilitates us, of course, to assign them to the Period of Gajapati Purusottama dev of Bhoi dynasty. In case of the present inscriptions both the names of Gajpati Purusottamadev and Māhārājā Mānasingha have been mentioned besides the donor Jayemala deva with the Anka year, day and date of the Gajapati king. In both the inscriptions of Manjuri the Anka year has been mentioned as 8 of Gajapati Purusottamadev. It was the 30th day of the month of Māgha(January-February) and the tenth day of the bright fortnight on Friday when the land grants have been made for the worship of Lord Mahādeva sthāneswara. Taking the period into consideration it may be calculated as the 13th February of 1605 AD. in the English era. Gajapati Purusottamdev assumed power after his father Gajapati Rāma Chandradev's death in the 1600 A.D. most probably prior to the day of suniā when the Anka year starts. Hence the 3rd Anka starts on 6/9/1600 and accordingly the 8th Anka begins on 26/8/1604<sup>(2)</sup>. The month of Māgha in 1605 AD. begins on the 15th of January and so the 30th day of Māgha corresponds to the 13th of February of the same year. Though Māhārājā Mānsingha the then subādar of Orissa and Bengal had been recalled to Delhi by the Emperor Ākbar in the year 1604 AD.<sup>(3)</sup> he was still continuing as the subādar even after Ākbar's death in the year 1605 AD. He was replaced by Qutubuddin Khān in the year 1607 AD. when Orissa became a separate subā.<sup>(4)</sup> Hence in the early part of 1605 AD Mānsingha's tenure was still in vogue. So his name has been rightly mentioned in the inscriptions in the early part of 1605 AD.

As per the inscriptions one, Jayemaladeva was the jāgirdār of Manjuri. Under the revenue administration of the Mughals the Mughalbandi Orissa was divided into three sarakars namely Jaleswar, Bhadrak and Cuttack<sup>(5)</sup>. Under the subādar's deputy subādar's were appointed to each sarkār and in each sarkār there were several Jāgirdār's. Jāgirdār's had their Ijarādār's (Zamindār's) who collected revenue from the farmers in shape of grains through their Amin's<sup>(6)</sup>. Hence being a Jāgirdār under Bhadrak sarkār Jayemaladeva

was obviously highly placed. The name of Jayamaladeva is probably unknown to the Orissan history. We are apprised of one Rājā Kalyānamala, the son of Todarmal who became subādār of Orissa in the year 1611A.D. Todarmal was incharge of land settlement of Orissa<sup>(7)</sup> when Orissa was annexed to the Mughal Kingdom. Hence it may be presumed that Jayamaladeva might have been one of the sons of Todarmala or Jayemaladeva and Kalyānamala might have been one and the same person. Kalyānamala might have changed his name from Jayemala to Kalyān Mal after his assumption of power as subādār. However the inscriptions provide us the information of great historical importance of the Mughal rule in Orissa.

### **Purport:-**

The Purport of both the incriptions are the same except that the second side displays land grant on kindling lamps near the deity and for the same duty during the festivals. The construction of altar has been mentioned in both the sides. Secondly the donor grants land on the same day and date. The attendants have been separately given land grants for their enjoyment and separate land grants have also been made out of the same area for the enjoyment of the deity.

### **Palaeographic Consideration:-**

The most interesting feature in these two inscriptions is their palaeography. They have been engraved in the early Oriya script. Another feature in the letters used in these inscriptions is that the horizontal top strokes of proto-Oriya have been all along represented by curves and thereby certain transitional letters have evolved along with modern Oriya letters. As such certain alternative forms of one and the same letter have come up. We may call them karani' type of script where some of the letters are alike in karani and modern type. The first side of the inscription displays a mixture of early oriya script and modern Oriya script for which they may be called transitional letters in the evolution of modern Oriya alphabet. In the second side there are early oriya, karani and modern Oriya scripts used invariably in every line. Covering a long period from the early years of 13th century A.D.<sup>(9)</sup> The characteristics of the Oriya script has come upto such an admixture at the end of the 15th century A.D. Hence these inscriptions have their orthographic importance too. Moreover on account of this, it is presumed that the inscriptions have been engraved by two different persons.

There are certain letters used in the first side namely 'e' 'o' ka, ga, gha, 'ja', ta, tha, na, pa, ba, bha, la, and 'ha' which appear to be affiliated to Nāgari and Proto-Bengali script. As a matter of fact proto-Oriya has come through Nāgari and proto Bengali scripts and taken the shape of transitional oriya or early Oriya script. Certain letters like 'ra' 'i' 'u' etc. have retained the developmental shape of early oriya which was in use during early 14th century A.D. over the above these Karani' letters are more usual in the second side. The letters like 'ja' 'ji' 'ti' ka, kha, sa etc. are different from those of the first

side. Certain letters like 'ha', ka, ma, sa, etc. have been used in alternative forms namely modern Oriya and early Oriya or karani scripts. Moreover the tail-like structure found in 'i' 'i' ra, bha, etc. is absent in the letters rather a slanting stroke has been used below. Later on perhaps the curved top stroke has joined the slanting stroke to form the tail like structure.

Another orthographic peculiarity in these inscriptions is the secondary symbols of the vowels. There is no consistency in the spellings of words as short forms and long forms of secondary vowels have not been properly paid heed to. In many cases the engraver has used the secondary short forms of 'i' and 'u'. Long forms are however used in case of 'Bīra', Malī, srī, in the second side. Contracted forms of words like Jāgridār instead of Jāgirdār, pṛsottam instead of purusottama, Mādhenka instead of Mādhebanka, samparadā instead of sampradāya, Pramānika instead of Parimānika have been used in both the sides. Similarly expanded forms like 'Maidha' instead of Madhya has been used too. Certain words like thanesura, Rajesura, Āe, Bae, diudia, diu, hithu etc. have been used which show the local pronunciation of cluster words or the spoken forms. They have become colloquial in course of pronunciation. As a matter of fact no punctuation mark is found in the first side. The letters are inscribed without indicating the beginning or end of a word or a sentence. In the second side we find some vertical strokes at the end of sentences but they are not systematic all along. As a whole these inscriptions are important from the palaeographic point of view inspite of irregularity of word order and diverse nature of the scripts, which is usual in the early Oriya inscriptions.

### **Linguistic Consideration:-**

These two inscriptions are equally important for their linguistic peculiarities. The language used in them may be divided into three sections i.e. Tatsama, Desi or colloquial, and yāvanika or perso'-Arabic, Except a few words for stating the status and titles of rulers and donor all other words are either colloquial or Perso-Arabic in origin. The colloquial words are Bhui(without the nasal sound) Maidha, gāo, Thāneswara, diu, bila, dighi, suāra, Pramānika, samparadā, tipa(dipa), banacerā, Mādheba, Jāgā, hāthi, etc. The yāvanika or perso-arabic words are Jāgridar, Ujiri, Amale, gāe, tahaliā, suāra, Harāma, Musalamāna, etc. This was because spoken Oriya and local use are inevitable but perso-Arabic elements were creeping into the language system as Orissa was ruled by the Musalmāns and Mughals in those days. Now-a-days our language has been enriched like other Indian languages for the infiltration of foreign words from Persian, Arabic, English etc. The inscriptions display us the beginning stage of infiltration.

The verbs used in the inscriptions are 'ra(la)gaila' (offered) 'Tolaila' (constructed), datta (was given) Kari(doing) Kariba(will do) Karuthiba (will be doing) hariba (will misappropriate) harile (if takes away) harai(takes away), Khāi(will eat) etc. Out of them the honorific form like 'tolāile' and 'lagāilā' should have been used instead of 'tolāilā' and 'lagāilā'. In case of khāi it should have been 'khāiba' like 'hariba'. This sort of use provides us the clue that either the honorific forms of verbs were yet to come in those

days or the colloquial use of verbs has been made deliberately without caring for the status of the person.

The case endings used in the inscriptions are 'je'(who) Bhoge(for enjoyment) Bhogaku(for enjoyment) Ku(to) ra(of) digara(of) etc. Bhoge and Bhogaku have the similar meaning and they represent a colloquial use. 'Digara' represents 'Mānankara' the plural use of 'of'.

After all it may be observed that these two inscriptions are the evidences of developing modern Oriya alphabet and a growing standard language like other modern Indian languages.

### ***Notes and References:-***

1. Proceedings of the I H R Commission:-XXII : 89.
2. Mahapatra K.N. Khurudha Itihasa, (Cuttack 1984) 60.
3. Mahatab H.K.- History of Orissa-II. 384.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid : 389
6. Ibid.
7. Sterling :- An Account of Orissa proper : 32.
8. Tripathy K.B.- The Evolution of Oriya Language and script (Cuttack-1962) : 46.

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