

SANSKRIT POETS AND SCHOLARS FLOURISHED DURING SURYAVAMSI GAJAPATI PERIOD (1435-1568AD) IN ORISSA

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The History of Sanskrit literature in Orissa has been divided into three broad periods, such as : (A) Early period (c. 300-1100AD), (B) Mediaeval period (1100-1500 AD) and post Independence period (1568-1948 AD). The subject namely the Sanskrit poets and scholars of Orissa flourished in the reign of the Suryavamsi Gajapati Period (1435-1568 AD) comes under the last phase of the mediaeval period and early phase of the third period. The published epigraphic records, treated to be the primary sources of the history prior to the period under discussion are mainly written in Sanskrit language. It is known that the Sanskrit verses composed in various metres are incorporated in the inscriptions of Orissa from the 7th century A. D. and onwards, though in earlier epigraphic records, Sanskrit prose is seen predominant.

The Inscriptions of Orissa, published so far not only throw light on the study of various branches of learning and development of Sanskrit literature in Orissa but unfold the forgotten names of many poets and scholars and their works which have like other parts of the country enriched the Sanskrit literature of India through the ages. Hence it will not be out of place to mention the name of reputed scholars of Orissa who flourished prior to the reign of Suryavamsi Gajapatis of Orissa. They are as follows :—

Name (1)	Year (2)	Work (3)
1. Visnu Sarma	450 A. D.	<i>Panchatantra</i> in five parts containing 75 stories on various problems of the society and Culture
2. Murari	850 A. D.	<i>Anargharaghava Nataka</i> in seven acts based on <i>Ramayana</i> with depiction of Orissan Culture. It was staged at Puri district car festival.
3. Purusottama Deva	850 A. D.	<i>Trikandasesa</i> , a book of Lexicon on Orissan Culture and Oriya words.
4. Krisna Mishra	1050 A. D.	<i>Prabodhachandrodaya Nataka</i> , an alligorical drama in 6 acts, based on Indian philosophy.

(1)	(2)	(3)
5. Satananda Acharya	1099 A. D.	<i>Bhasvati</i> of Astronomy and <i>Satanandasamgraha</i> on <i>Smrti</i> .
6. Sriharsa	1100 A. D.	<i>Naisadhacharita</i> in 22 cantos 2790 verses, <i>Khandanakhandakhadya</i> on philosophy and other works.
7. Govardhana Acharya	1125 A. D.	<i>Aryasaptasati</i> containing 702 verses on <i>Sringara</i> sentiment.
8. Jayadeva	1147 A. D.	<i>Gitagovinda</i> in 12 cantoes, 24 songs 72 or 77 verses on secret sports of Radha-Krisna.
9. Vidyadhara	1245 A. D.	<i>Ekavali</i> in 8 unmesa or chapters contains 314 verses on Narasigha Deva I (1238-1264 A. D.)
10. Bhubanananda	1275 A. D.	<i>Aryapadesataka</i> in 100 verses composed on various metres on various issues.
11. Vajapeyi SambhukaraMishra	1275 A. D.	<i>Sambhukara Paddhati</i> on <i>Srauta</i> sacrificies. His other works are on <i>smrit</i> .
12. Sankhadhara	1275 A. D.	<i>Smrtisamucchaya</i> and <i>Natakamelaka-Natika</i> .
13. Sridhara Svami	1278 A. D.	<i>Bhavarthadipika</i> tika on <i>Srimad-Bhagavata</i> , <i>Subodhinitika</i> on <i>Srimad Bhagavadgita</i> and other works.
14. Vajapeyi Vidyakara Mishra	1330 A. D.	<i>Nityachara Paddhati</i> and <i>Vidyakarapaddhati</i> on <i>Smrti</i> .
15. Ramadasa Vajapeyi	1375 A. D.	<i>Kunda-Mandapa Laksana</i> and other works.
16. Krsnananda Sandhivigrahika	1365 A. D.	<i>Sahrdayananda</i> in 15 cantos cantis 935 verses.
17. Visvanatha Kaviraja	1435 A. D.	<i>Sahitya Darpana</i> in 10 chapters on rhetorics, <i>Chandrakala Natika</i> and other works.

Among the other works some were known from the various sources and some have been noticed in other parts of the country but many have been lost for ever. However the poets and scholars of later period have been highly influenced by the rich tradition of Sanskrit literature and Culture in Orissa.

the reign of Suryavamsi Gajapati dynasty begins with the advent the Emperor Gajapati Kapilendra Deva (1435-1466 A. D.) and ends with his grandson Gajapati Prataprudra Deva (1497-1535 A. D.). But the period however continues till to the death of Mukunda Deva-I who remained on the throne of Orissa from 1559-1568 A. D.

During the period under discussion a National movement grew up in the Cultural life of the Oriya as a result of which various aspects of the religion and society propagated through literary works composed in Sanskrit as well as in Oriya language. to glorify the religious places, Gods and Goddesses and the places of tourist interest some Puranic literature was developed and composed or compiled. Among such works the names of *Purusottama Mahatmya*, *Kapila Samhita*, *Niladrimahodaya*, *Ekamra Purana*, *Ekamra Chandrika*, *Prachi Mahatmya* and *Viraja Mahatmya* are worth mentioning. Now the names of the poets and scholars flourished during this period are noted below for general information of the scholars.

1. Gajapati Kapilendra Deva was a great hero as well as a Patroniser of scholars and himself a writer too. The authorship of a vyayoga type of uparupaka (Minor drama) named *Parasurama Vijaya* is attributed to him. There are five benedictory verses in the beginning of this Uparupaka in which Lord Visma (verses-1) Lord Jagannatha (verses-2. 3) Rukmini and Srikrnsna (verse) and God Siva (verse-5) have been prayed. In the following words the work eulogises Gajapati Kapilendra Deva who was like an incarnation of Parasurama.

यद्विद्वन्मोक्षार्थं विद्वन्मोक्षार्थं विद्वन्मोक्षार्थं विद्वन्मोक्षार्थं विद्वन्मोक्षार्थं
 एवमुक्त्वा... एवमुक्त्वा... एवमुक्त्वा... एवमुक्त्वा... एवमुक्त्वा...

It is known from the work that it was written and staged in the Jagannatha temple at the time of a festival prior to 1458 A. D. The work conveys the religious liberality of this great monarch. ⁽¹⁾

2. Nrsingha Misra Vajapeyi, a profound scholar and a justice of the celebrated Gajapati Kapilendra Deva (1435-1446 A. D.) revived the Advaitavada of Sri Sankara and wrote *Samksepariraka vartika*, a commentary on Samksepariraka of Jagadguru Sankaracharya. He spent some years of his life at Kasi and wrote there a work called *Kasimimansa*⁽²⁾. But unfortunately the manuscripts of the above works have not yet been noticed. His grand-father Mrtyanjaya wrote *Suddhimuktavali* a work on Dharmasastra and father Jalesvara composed *Jalesvarapaddhati* on various vedic sacrifices.

3. Kalidasa Chayani (1450 A.D.) was famous for his work *Suddhichandrika* a very popular work on Dharmasastra which has many sanskrit and Oriya commentaries. The work contains only 25 verses written in Sardulavikridita metre and deals on purificatory rites at death⁽³⁾ impurity.

4. Gajapati Purusottama Deva (1497 A. D.) the son of Gajapati Kapilendra Deva, was a great conqueror and a reputed scholar like his father. In the words of Kavidindima Jivadeva Acharya he has been praised in the following manner :—

Praudhapratapamartanda, *Nirnayasamgraha* and *Kautukachintamani* is attributed to him. Out of the above the second work was compiled by Ramakrsna Bhattas of Kasi under the patronage of Gajapati Prataprudra Deva and he received the title of 'Panditasiromani' from Rajaguru Balabhadra Misra who examinrd the work 'Pratapamartanda'

The famous work (a) *Sarasvativilasa* in 5 ullasas was compiled by Laksmidhara Bhatta of Andhra country, who remained in the court of Prataprudra Deva for some years prior to 1520 A. D.

(b) The work *Pratapamartanda* or *Praudhapratamartanda* in 5 prakasas on Dharmasastra, the authorship of which has been attributed to Gajapati Prataparudra Deva, was compiled by Ramakrsna son of Madhava Bhatta.

(c) *Kautkachintamani*, another work attributed in the name of Gajapati Prataparudra Deva is written in 1520 A. D. It is divided in diptis which deal *Chitrabandha*, composition of Kavy and black magic respectively.

(d) The work *Nirnaya Samgraha* of the above author has not yet been noticed.⁽¹⁰⁾

7. Rajaguru Godavar Misra, the son of Balabhadra Misra was the royal preceptor and the prime Minister of Gajapati Prataparudra Deva after his father som time after 1510 A. D. he was a great scholar, a poet of repute and proficient in Tantra as is known from the titles viz *Godavari Vardhana*, *Kavipungava*, *Panditaraja* etc. used with him according to the citations of *Jaya Chintamani* and *Acharya Chintamani* written by him. Information about works of Godavara is obtained from his *Harihara Chaturanga*, a treaties on the art of warfare⁽¹¹⁾. They are *Tantra Chintamani*, *Advaitadarpana*, *Adhikaranadarpana*, *Nitichintamani*, *Acharya Chintamani*, *Nitikalpalata* etc. But except the published book no manuscripts of other works have so fare beendiscovered.

8. Kavidindima Jivadeva Acharya (1475 A. D.) the son of Rajaguru Trilochana and Ratnavati was a commander-in-chief (dm{hZrn{V) of the Gajapati Army, a great scholar and a great poet. He was also a royal preceptor of Gajapati Prataparudra Deva. He wrote *Bhaktibhagavatamahakavya* based on the 10th Skandha of Srimanbhagavata. The work has been divided into 32 cannot which contain more than 3000 versescomposed in different matres. He was the author of an allegorical drama called *Bhaktivaibhavanataka* in nine acts in which the excellence of devotion to Lord Krsna has been proved. It was in the Jagannatha temple at the timen of Dolayatra festival. has other work called 'Utsahavati' based on the episode of *Mahabharata* is a minor Rupaka staged in a pillared hall near Jagannatha temple in the spring seasons. He got the titles *Mahamahopadhyaya*, *Kavidinidi*, *Kaviraja*, *Srimad Bhagavata*, *Paramacharya* etc. for his out standing literary works.⁽¹²⁾

It will not be out of place to some words on the erudition of the poet which has been depicted in the last verse of the *Bhaktibhogavata Mahakavya* as noted below :—

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

It is known from his *Bhaktivaibhava Nataka* that he was honoured by Gajapati Prataparudra Deva with eight gold handed chamaras, one goldstafed umbrella and a resowding drawn in appreciation of his poetic attainments as noted below :—

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ २ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ४ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ५ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ६ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ७ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ८ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ९ ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १० ॥⁽¹⁴⁾

9. Kavichandraraya Divakara Misra (1464 A. D.), the son of Vaidyesvara and Mukta, Devi was one of the great Sanskrit poets of India. It is known from his *Bharata* that his family members were noted for their scholarship, poetic talent, mastery over six *Vedangas* and six *Darsanas*. From the '*Manimalanatika*' of Anadi Misra we come to know that the descendants of Divakara named Mukanda Misra, Satanjiva and Anadi Misra (1660 A. D.) were also famous for their contributions to sanskrit literature. The poet Divakara has composed nine works as noted below :—

(a) *Bharatamrta-mahakavya* is a work on *Mahabharata*, the manuscript of which is available now upto 93 verses of the 40th canto where it ends abruptly with the description of *Salyavadha* episode.⁽¹⁵⁾ Hence this is an incomplete work which must have been ended in 48 or 50 cantos. The available manuscript contains 3338 verses composed in different metres. This is an important work which like '*Naisadhiyacharita*' of Sriharsa narrates the family history of the poet and mentions his works in the concluding stanzas of some of the cantos of *Bharatamrta*.

(b) *Laksanadarsa-mahakavya* is a notable work of the poet composed on following the footprints of the '*Bhatikavya*' of the poet Bhatti. The work is available upto 14th cantos only. It is based on the Pandava Charit, episode of the *Mahabharata* beginning from the exide of Pandavas.⁽¹⁶⁾

(c) *Abhinavagitagovinda* attributed in the name of the patron Gajapati Purusottama Deva, is a real composition the poet Divakara according to the mention made in the last verse of canto XXVII of *Bharatamrta*. It is also known from the last stanza of the sixth canto of *Bharatamrta* that the poet Divakara adorned the court of Krsnadeva Raya, the king of Vijayanagar (1509-1529 A. D.) for some years. It is presumed that his *Laksanadarsa* was written while he was at Vijayanagar as no manuscript of this work has been discovered in Orissa. According to Orissan tradition the poet Divakara left the court of Vijayanagar when the fight between the two states Orissa and Vijayanagara became very intense.

The *Abhinavagitagovinda* in 10 cantos is an imitation of *Gitagovinda*. It contains 72 chatuspadi songs and 150 verses composed in different *Ragas* and metres respectively. This was published by the Directorate of Culture, Orissa in 1977.

It is known from the *Bharatmata Mahakavya* that he has written some other works namely *Dhurtacharita Bhana*, *Devisataka*, *Rasamanjari*, *Haricharitchampu* and *Prabhatinaka* out of which *Rasamanjari* has been, perhaps, attributed to Krsnadeva Raya

of Vijayanagar. But unfortunately the manuscripts of other works have not been discovered as yet.⁽¹⁷⁾

10. Jagannatha Dasa (1491-1550 A. D.), the son of Bhagabandasa and Padmanavati of Kapoleswarapur Sasan, Puri was a famous scholar in Sanskrit as well as in Oriya literature. He is worshipped in every home for his Oriya *Bhagabata* which is treated as a religious scripture through out Orissa. According to the scholars he has composed 8 works in Sanskrit and 12 works in Oriya language. Among the Sanskrit works *Niladrisataka*, *Upasana Sataka*, *Srikrnabhakti Kalpalataphala* and *Nityagupta Chludamani* are worth mentioning.⁽¹⁸⁾

11. Murari Misra (1550 %) the son of Kahnu Misra was a famous Smrti writer of Orissa. His work *Prayaschittamanohara* on expiation rites of Dharmasastra was very popular.⁽¹⁹⁾

12. Kavindra Markandeya Misra, the son of Mangaladeva was a contemporary of Gajapati Prataparudra Deva (1497-1535 A. D.) and Mukunda Deva (1559-1568 A. D.). His first work called *Dasagrivavadha mahakavya* in 20 cantos based on *Ramayana* was completed in 1500 A. D.⁽¹⁹⁾ and his second work *Prakrtasarvasva* was completed before 1565A. D.⁽²⁰⁾ In the Colophone of the mahakavya he has introduced himself as *Kacirajachakrvarti* but in the second work he was used the epithet *Kavindra*. According to the scholars both for the same name and were *Brahmana* by caste hourished in the same period in Puri area. So they may be taken as indentical⁽²¹⁾. 13. Ganga Dasa (1525 AD.) was the son of Santasa Deva, Gopala Dasa, the writer of *Parijataharana Nataka* and his preceptor, Purusottama Bhalla was the author' Chhandogovinda ⁽²²⁾. The work *Chhandomanjari* of Ganga Dasa has been quoted at several places of the 'Vanmaya Viveka' of Chintamani Misra(145-1575 AD) of Puri. This work is also quoted in Krsnakarnamrta commentary by Gopala Bhatta (1541-AD) and Ujjvalanilamani of Rupa Gosvami (1525-AD).From the concluding verse of Chhandomanjari it is known that Ganga Dasa was also the author of Achyutacharita, Kamsarisataka and Dinesasataka.⁽²³⁾

14. Raya Ramananda Pattanayak, son of Bhavananda Ray of Banntapur, Pur was a master of Vaisnava Philosophy, that propogated the dual Radhakrsna worship prior to visit of Srichaitanya to Orissa in 1509 AD. He was the Covernor at Rajamahendry under the Gajapati Prataparuda Deva. He wrote a drama in 5 acts called *Sri Jagannatha Vallabha Nataka*. It is also known by name *Ramananda Sangitanataka*. It is an imitation of Gitagovinda and contains 21 songs and 68 verses composed in different Ragas and metres respectively.⁽²⁴⁾ The name of his other work is 'Tikapanchaka' the manuscript of which is not noticed as yet.

15. Madhavi Dasi the cousin sister of Raya Ramananda also wrote a drama called *Sri Purusottamadeva Nataka* which has not been noticed as yet.⁽²⁵⁾

16. Jayadeva Achrya, the son of Kavidindima jivadeva Acharya is the author of a minor drama (Uparupaka) named *Piyusa Lahari* which was edited and published with a Sanskrit Commentary and English translation by Dr. K. K. Kar.⁽²⁶⁾ It is based on the sportive dance of Radha-krisna in the spring season (Rasalila). This drama was staged in the

compound of the Jagannatha temple at Puri by an opera party organised by the poet himself. The poet concludes this work with a prayer to Lord jagannath in the following words.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

His other work *Vaisnavililamritam* is also based on the depiction of Rasalila. These two works were composed in between 1525-1535AD. ⁽²⁷⁾

17. Bharatibhusana Vardhana Mohapatra, the son of Kavidindima Jivadeva Achary and younger brother of Jayadeva Acharya was a great Scholar. According to the colophon he was the author of *Durgotsavachandrika* a work on the autumnal worship of Goddess Durga which is observed for 16 days in Orissa. ⁽²⁸⁾ It is regarded as an authority like *Sarada Saradarchana Paddhati* of Godavara Misra throughout Orissa. But the authorship of this work has been attributed to the king Ramachandra Deva-I (1568-1600 A. D.) the patron of the scholar.

18. Paramananda dasa Kavikarnapura, illustrious son of Sivananda Sena of Bengal who stayed at Puri under the patronage of Gajapati Prataparudra deva wrote the famous drama *Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nataka* in 8 acts and staged at the time of the car-festival at the bidding of his patron. ⁽²⁹⁾

19. Mahamahopadhyaya Govinda or Kavisekhara Govinda is well known for his Kavya *Pradumnasambhava* written in 19 cantos. His other work *Gaurakrsnodayamahakavya* in 18 cantos depicts the life history of Srichaitanya and his activities in Orissa. It is a historical work written in Kavya form like other historical sanskrit works namely *Bhaktibhagavata*, *Kosalananda*, *Gangavamsanucharitachampur* etc. of Orissa. ⁽³⁰⁾

20. Chintamani Misra was the grand son of Harihara Misra Vajapeyi, a court poet of Govinda Vidyadhara (1542-1559Ad.) Mrtyunjaya Misra and Sri Devi who lived near Nilachala (Puri) were the parents of the poet Chintamani who was a great poet of Orissa.

His famous work on rhetorics and prosody is *Vanmaya Viveka* divided into 6 chapters and 3200 verses composed in Puri in Kali year 4675 or 1574 AD. It is known from the above work that the poet Chintamani was also the author of *Sambararicharita*, *Trisirovadhya Vyayoga*, *Kadambarisara*, *Sabhapromoda*, *Paksavali*, *Kamsavadha*, *Krtyapuspavali* and *Samiti Varnana*. But unfortunately except *Vanmaya Viveka* and *Trisirovadhya Vyayoga* no other works been noticed as yet. ⁽³¹⁾

21. Krsnadasa Vddajena Mohapatra is the author of *Gitaparakasa* a treatise on music in 7 ullasas or chapters. The first and last verse of the work are quoted below :-

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 xx xx xx
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

It is known from the *Gitaparakasa* that the poet Krisnadasa was a court poet of Gajapati Mukunda Deva (1559-1568 AD.) with whom Akbar, the great Mughal Emperor of Delhi (1557-1605 AD.) entered into an alliance. ⁽³²⁾.

22. Narasingha Misra Vajapeyi (1520-1580 AD.) the son of Murari Misra the grandson of Dharadhara Misra, the cansion brother of Godavar Mishra was a great smrti-writer of Orissa. It is known from a work called *Simhavajapeyi Vamsavali* that Narasingha was a brilliant man. Through the help of the Goddess Siddhesvari he acquired mastery over the six philosophies. He defeated a famous logical of Ganda (Bengal) by argument in the royal court. He visited the court of Akbar some time between 1565-1568 AD with musician Mahapatra (Krsnadasa) and Ray Paramanda the ambassodor of Mukunda Deva.

It is known that Narasingha wrote 18 digests each of which is called pradipa, Besides famous *Nityachara pradipa* the first part of which was published by the Asiatic society of Bengal in 1907 and the second part in 1928, he wrote other works namely *samaya-varsa-Bhakti-Prayaschitta-Sraddha-Pratistha-Sankarabhasya-Chayana-Vyavastha pradipa* ⁽³³⁾. etc.

The study of *Nityacharapradipa* throws some light on the social and religious history of Orissa in the 16th Century.

23. Visnu Sarma (1550-AD) a smrti writer composed his work called *Smrti saroja kalikain* 8 chapters.

24. Visvanatha Sena, the son of Tapana Mohapatra, the royal Doctor of Gajapati Mukunda Deva was a reputed physician. His works namely *Ayurvedasarasamgraha*, *Visvanatha Chikitsa* and *Pathyapathya Vinischaya* were very popular in Orissa.

25. Narayana Bhanja Deva (1525-Ad) the king of Baud composed his *Gitakavya Rukminiparinaya* in imitation of Gitagovinda. The work is divided in to 6 cantos and contains 12 songs and 40 verses.

The study of the other branches of Sanskrit literature like *Jyotisa*, *Tantra*, *Darsana* etc. with writing of commentaries on older scriptures and literatures were also taken up under the patronage of the Gajapati monarchs which created a vast field for development of Sanskrit as well as Priya literature in the following centuries.

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