

Poet Jayadev Belongs to Orissa

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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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