Lord Jagannath Symbol of National Integration

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Myths history and legend have all mingled over centuries and formed a grand composite culture with lord Jagannath. He is not only the god of Hindus or the Indians but also the lord of the entire humanity the deliverer and redeemer of all.

It is generally believed that Purusottama Jagannath is the final goal of salvation. He appears to be supreme authority in all matters. Puri as the seat of Jagannath is for ever centre of eastern religious thought.

The Trinity installed on a massive throne, the Ratna Simhasana in the Santum Santorum has evoked divergent spiritual responce and discursive speculations in the minds of the devout worshipers and the critic.

When Jagannath is worshipped at Ratnavedi. He is Narayana Manchasina, He is Ganesh during Navakalevara, He is Rudra during Car Festival and He is Surya Narayan while enjoying devine slumber. He takes the form of Durga. Thus, He combines in him all the Pancha Devata belonging to different sects just as the Jagannath Cult is an assimilation of the various forms of religion and modes of worship so also there is under current of some philophycal system like 'Abheda' 'Bhedaveda' and Achintyabhedha' as revealed Veda in the ritualistic practices.

The Chaturddha muratti though four in number, constitutes one composite whole and at the time of daily worship three priests perform their rites simultaneously.

Rituals of Sri Jagannath temple are quite different from the ritual system of puja performed in other temples. It is the accumulation of many faculties of Hindu religion, which synthecizes here on one platform and rituals performed by 'Arya' 'Anarya and 'Brahmin' called Aryan Raja "Indradyumna", Savara srestha 'Biswabasu' and Brahmin "Bidyapati". This seva puja is traditionally performed by sevaka called as Gajapati, Daitapati and Brahmin.

The reference to Jagannath has been made in the purusa suktta of the Rig - Veda. This suktta tells about the image made of Daru in
Purusottama. The Daru Upasana has been gradually moulded into an image of purusa upasana. The svetadvata Upanisad and Kaivalya Upanisad describe no Purusa Bramha who possesses either hands or legs.

Description of the Purusa serves as the basis of the peculiar form of Purusottama and the associate of Valmiki mentions the worship of Jagannath in Uttarakhanda. Traditionally in worship of Purusottama a legendary King named Indradyumna is found in the Mahabharata. It is mentioned that the vedi which is identified with the Antarvedi on which Jagannatha is enshrined. Skandha Purana also speaks of antarvedi as the place of worship of Jagannath.

Against such conceptual back drop Jagannath culture is to be evaluated. The term Jagannath etymologically means the Lord of the Universe, that is, the supreme deity of the world communities. The entire world consisting of different communities have been loudly classified on the basis of their colour into three categories that is:

* White for Aryan
* Black for Nagrite
* Yellow for Mangoloids

The Jagannath Trinity exhibits these three colours that are Balabhadra white, Jagannath black and Subhadra yellow. Such colour combination is unique in the whole pantheon of gods and goddesses worshipped in the whole world. There can be no more convincing symbolic representation of whole world concept as in the holy trio of Jagannatha on the basis of colour combination.

Scholars say that this conception of god integrated the conflicting religious faiths with their presiding deities like Vishnu, Rudra and Shakti. Such integration and religious synthesis is no where available. All divergent communities subscribing to different beliefs and philosophies have been inextricably blended into one. No other religious mechanism could have achieved so much of socio-religious cohesion and socialistic approach to sectarian community.

These religious activities depict the life and style of a royal human being, in eyes whose everybody is equal without discrimination. He becomes of the directive force of the entire community instead of keeping away, as and the only god to be worshipped Lord Jagannath bears the name of Purusottama.

Starting from socialist, philosophy to universal brotherhood, nationalistic ideal to patriotism, devotion, dedication and perseverance all have been merged within the vast ocean of religious conviction and consciousness.

The cult is based upon ideals of democracy, humanitarian principle of equality, honesty and integrity.

He is rightly required as a symbol of national integration.

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