

# Astrology, Astronomy and Spiritualism in 'Siddhanta Darpana': A Comparison with Similar Thoughts

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*Jyotisham api tatjyotih .....*  
*Jnanam jneyam jnanagamyam .....*

(Gita, Chapter 13, Verse-18)

*The creator of 'Siddhanta Darpana' was indeed one among millions. He worked and struggled in the solitude to 'hear the unheard and glimpse the invisible'.*

'Siddhanta Darpana' is an immortal creation of the famous Odia astrologer Samanta Chandrasekhar. Astrology emanates from the Vedic thoughts. It is immensely useful for the society. Aruna Kumar Upadhyaya, in his translation of 'Siddhanta Darpana' in Devnagari script writes:

*'Udwesya Jyotisa' is known as the eyes of the Vedas. Setting it apart, it is difficult to know the time of ancient literature and scriptures. Without knowing time of the scriptures, any discussion on the Sashtras may not be proper and hence may not be understood in the proper context. (Preface i)*

Upadhyaya further clarifies with specific reference to 'Siddhanta Darpana':

*'Siddhanta Darpana' is useful in two ways. Hitherto, the disputed subjects in all astrological theories have found a solution in*

*this great book. One may, therefore, benefit the knowledge of all astrological literature by reading this one great book on astrology. Secondly, the writer, Late Samanta Chandrasekhara, wherever, had not explained the astrological theories of the past, he had, at least, given indication how to approach the same. Last but not least, Chandrasekhara had made correction in the movement of the Moon. In its correctness, it is equal to the modern astronomy. (Ibid, Preface-ii).*

As a subject, the present astrology in India is taken into account from the period of Aryabhata. However, there are rare astrological master-pieces like, 'Jyotisha Bhaskar', written by the Divine teacher Brihaspati, which shines like the Sun in the sphere of astrological sciences. This is not available in the public domain. References about the same may only be available in the great and exemplary Samhitas written by

Sri Achyutananda, the rarest genius and the Saint who adorned the soil of Utkal during the regime of king Prataprudra. In the ancient time, Magadha was one of the richest places not only in India but also in the entire world. In the capital city of Magadha, institutions were established for imparting knowledge on 'Khagola'. Aryabhata was the Principal Preceptor in one such institution. The name of this capital city was 'Puspapur' or 'Kusumapura' at that time which is the present Patna city. Since there was an apprehension of the invasion of Huns, Aryabhata wrote a formulae (Sutra) to indicate the availability of astrological knowledge there. He writes:

*aryabhata stwiham, nigadati satyam.  
kusumpure varcitam jnanam.*

Through the above couplet, Aryabhata symbolically states that all astrological knowledge are available at Kusumapur. After Aryabhata, Barahamihira and Bhaskar wrote about this great mystical science basing on their respective studies of scriptures. None of them, however, has explained what is the flow of the number in assessing the movement of the planets. However, 'Siddhanta Siromani' written by Bhaskar is one of the standard treatise on astrology of present day as observed by Sri Aruna Upadhyaya in his preface to 'Siddhanta Darpana'. (P. XV).

In the Indian tradition among the astrologers, Samanta Chandrasekhar and Bala Gangadhar Tilak were considered to be the contemporaneous exponents. Whereas Tilak studied English and modern Mathematics, Samanta Chandrasekhara had no scope to learn about these secular branches of studies. As a consequence, he had to struggle ceaselessly. Furthermore, this rare genius and his immortal creation could not be appropriately recognized by the western scholars nor even by Indian

scholars outside Odisha. Another hurdle was that though Samanta wrote in Sanskrit language but he used Odia scripts. Thanks, however, to Professor Joges Ch. Ray whose introduction brought some recognition for this unprecedented talent.

At that point of time, it was unsettled whether the earth is static or the Sun is static. When western scientists were of the opinion that the earth moves round and the Sun is stationary, Samanta placed a completely different proposition. Samanta said that the earth is static. He assailed the western arguments saying that 'if all the stars are illuminating as the Sun and all of them spread light in all directions equally being static how then night dawns upon this earth'. His second argument was that 'if all the planets are moving around their orbits, what makes the largest planet, Brihaspati move so fast?' His reasonings could scarcely be countered by the western scientists. Chandrasekhara had no scope to telescope. His only instruments were two sticks and his deep concentration on the sky. Whatever may be the scientific position of his stand on the above issues, viewed from the present standard, it is no exaggeration to say that it was a great fortune for Odisha that such a talented son like Samanta Chandrasekhara was born in its soil. Born though in a small princely state like Khandapara, which has little importance in the world geography, Chandrasekhara had a tremendous sense of belonging for the state, its people and its highly adorable deities. Deeply moved by the culture of Odisha, he writes in 'Siddhanta Darpana':

*yatra khetram pabitrām vilasata sitarung mitra  
netrasya gatram,  
gotrayatratimatrah tadavayava sruta dipavatyō  
vicitrah  
swasthanasthah padasthapita nijajanata devatah*

*santi nitya  
martyah smartah smararta haricharanratah ca  
utkalah stat kalighnah.*

(Prakasha 23, Verse-2).

In the State where the Kshetra and body of the lotus eyed Lord Krishna exist, the state wherein exist several mountains, the State where in the temples, there is perennial Diwali and the deities though seated in their own respective temples confer high status to their devotees, the State where the people apart from doing their jobs sincerely, also actively utter the holy name of God and worship His lotus feet, the same Utkal State may destroy the vices of 'Kaliyuga'. The poet-astrologer asserts that the people of Odisha may appear small considered from the angle of material progress. But they reveal divinity in their appearance 'udra, proudha, prabhavo jayati paribadhah sanadeshasya soyam'. Such honour and sense of respect for Odia tradition, culture and people do find parallel comparison only in the descriptions in 'Kapila Samhita'. The great Saint Kapilacharya writes:

*sarbabapa haram desam udrum debaistu kalpitam  
srunudhwam kathyamanam hi vistarenasya bho  
dwijah,  
tasmina odre sada santi krishnarkaparbatiharah  
ekashya ekashya khetram tu sarbabapa  
pranasanam*

(Chapter 2, Verse 2 & 3).

According to Kapilacharya, Utkal is a State designed by the Divine to be the abode of Lord Krishna, Suryanarayana (the Sun God), Lord 'Maheswar' and Divine Mother 'Parvati'. The greatest glory of the state is the river Mahanadi. Kapila Samhita reveals that the river which flows close to the lotus feet of Lord Neela-Madhaba is the 'Divine Mother' 'Suradhuni', Bhagirathi whose sacred water sanctifies the Indian soil and Indian people from time immemorial.

*tatradese dwija srestha nadinam uttama nadi  
mahanandiiti vikshata sarvapapa pranodini  
tasyam nadyastu mahatmyam kathayami punah  
punah,  
jashyam snatwa nara srestham dibyalokam  
abapnyati ( Chapter-2, Verse 4 & 5)*

Sukanti, a great sage of ancient India, brought the Divine Mother Ganga "papaghnim Janhabi bhaktabatsalam" (the Divine Mother who loves all devotees and the destroyer of sins) to Utkal (Chapter 2, Verse-23). Sukanti prayed the Divine Mother who is 'trailokyapavini' to flow towards Purba Sagar i.e. Bay of Bengal. Moved by his prayer, the Almighty Mother answered :

*mahanadi iti bikhyatam gamisyami atra sarbada  
bhagirathena anita jathartham papanashinee  
tasmat sataguna prokta twayaham duritapaha  
sarbada taba kirtistu sthasyati atra mahitale*

( Chapter 2, Verse 33 & 34)

The Divine Mother said, 'Son', your penance be completed without any obstacle. When I will flow towards Purva Sagar (Bay of Bengal), 'I will not be known in my name. I will be known as Mahanadi from here'. (Kapila Samhita edited by Kedarnath Gabeshana Pratisthana, Grantha Mandira 2000 P.113). Bhagiratha once could do this because of his atmic consciousness, equity, equal-mindedness, shunning of all material prosperities, keeping the bird-like mind quiet and peaceful in heart and doing the assigned work in an unattached manner. (Yoga Vasistham Ramayana, Nirvana Prakasana). So also could do the sage Sukanti in a like manner. Similar was also the perseverance of Chandrasekhara who could bring the Jnana-Ganga for the humanity in the shape of 'Siddhanta Darpana'. Such is our culture, such is our glory and such is the blessing of the Almighty for this State and its people. The great sage, Kapilacharya, was firmly of the opinion that Utkal is the greatest among all the states and such a

state does not exist on the earth. Lord Purusottam is the king of this State. The principal deities of this State 'Krishnarka Parvati Hara', Lord Krishna, Lord Sun, Divine Mother Parvati and Lord Shiva all eternally reside in this State. All sacred Tirthas exist in this state. All the sacred Tirthas of the State are enriched with natural beauty. The saints do observe penance near them. Rivers, mountains, ocean, forest land, all situated in this State are magnified by the blessings of the deities.

Prajna Purusha, Pathani Samanta also created few other masterpieces apart from 'Siddhanta Darpana' namely 'Darpana Sara', 'Darsa Dipika' etc. But the book which has engaged the eminent scholars' attention across the centuries has always been 'Siddhanta Darpana'. The honour of the poet echoes in the heart of all Odias: "siddhanta darpana heva nahin laya, nara dehe thiva jabat hridaya". (As long as conscience exists in humanity, Siddhanta Darpana will not lose its glory). This talent colossus, achieved miraculous height without any infrastructure or scientific instrument or secular learning as earlier stated. This attracted immensely Prof. Joges Ch. Ray, who writes:

*He had no one to encourage him in his pursuit, and no notice was taken of his work. Our Govt. could only confer upon him an empty title which he had never coveted. Geniuses are like delicate plants, never plentiful anywhere and depend upon tender care for growth and development and facility. Let me therefore hope that the past neglect of his countrymen may yet be compensated, and that better may yet dawn upon our old and crippled observe of heavenly bodies (Ray, Introduction to 'Siddhanta Darpana').*

As earlier discussed astrology, had its origin from the Vedas. Vedas are the creation of

the Almighty Father. According to Rig Veda (10.121), the Lord known as 'Hiranya Garbha' was the first to exist. He then became the first Lord of the creation. He was the sole Lord of all those that breathe in the whole world. He created the earth and the sky. His laws are eternal. (R.N. Vaidya, Introduction to Vedas). Such an inspiration for exploring the Vedic knowledge engaged the attention of Samanta Chandrasekhara in whose conscientious writing the majesty of the universe prevailed. As a result, what emerged from 'Siddhanta Darpana' is a poet-seer-astrologer, a Vedic scholar and also a devotee of the highest order. Chandrasekhara writes:

*antarbedi tribedi nigatitamahima adhityaka  
nityakantah  
tungahsrungani jasyamara nikaragruhah pavani  
yad vaneeshreeh  
prakaro yatprapatah pramatha patinutopatyaka  
purjadeeya  
sa srisambhodbhari vitaratu jagatam mecakam  
mecakadrih*

(Prakasha 23, Verse 6).

(The Lord who knows the heart of all; whose greatness is praised highly in all the Vedas; the high floors of Whose mountains are always elegant; in Whose mountains' cage, the divine Deities stay and with their associationship, the devotees are sanctified, the walls of Whose temple are as high as mountains, the sacred precinct of Whose temple is always worshipped by Lord Shiva and Whose temple's sacred premises are always calm and cool (the rays of the Sun being covered by the clouds), the Lord of this Neelagiri may like to bless us always).

The saints, indeed, are very simple in their hearts and they always think of the wellbeing of the society. Through all their writings they only

pray for devotion before the lotus feet of the Lord, 'Rama charana rati dehu' as Goswami puts it in Bala Khanda of 'Shree Rama Charita Manasa'. It goes without saying that Samanta Chandrasekhara was a saint, equally pious. The flag known as 'Vaijayanti' which adorns 'Nilachakra' of Lord Sri Jagannath's temple has also not escaped the notice of the brilliant poet-seer, Chandrasekhara who writes in Siddhanta Darpana:

*tunga prasada srunga pratilaba pabana andolita  
vaijayanti  
bachhakaipadru tirtheswar sirasi caratpallavasri  
jayanti  
jamyaswamyatitamyajjana brujina camu murjitam  
tarjayanti  
payanmaya bhavadhwa shramamiva shaminam  
vijanaih marjayanti.*

(Prakash 23 verse 7).

In the Nilachakra of Lord Sri Jagannath, the Vaijayanti Flag is flying every moment in a rhythmical manner. There is no dearth of air at that place. The movement of this Flag, like the dancing waves in the ocean, beautify the environment in such a manner that it defeats the beauty of the dancing leaves of 'kalpabrikshya' of Tirtheswara. The flag bestows immense blessings. The sinners who are being penalised severely by Dharmaraj - 'Yamaraj' and his courtiers are saved by the grace of this Vaijayanti as they are purged of their sins by its sight. In this world of illusion, let this 'Vaijayanti' flag mitigate the struggles of our wearisome journey, as peace assuages the mind.

The poet-seer's vision was not confined to any regional or geographical limitation. He wished the salvation of the entire humanity. It is extremely difficult to believe that such a brilliant master-piece, like 'Siddhanta Darpana' could not be much explored due to constraints. Time has, however, taken some new dimensions. The steps

taken by Sri Aruna Kumar Upadhyaya in translating the Odia script into Devnagari script, undoubtedly, will go a long way in facilitating further research. He has created a rare opportunity for interested scholars. Central Universities across the country, different Sanskrit Universities may add to the height of such endeavour by discovering the real message, this blessed soul of the country wanted to give to the humanity. In the process, many invaluable wisdom may also come to lime-light. Professor Joges Chandra Ray was so much moved by the description in 'Siddhanta Darpana' that he wrote in February 1899 in his introduction to the Book.

*In this state of indigenous sciences, it is singular to find a man born and brought up in the recesses of the hills of Orissa far removed from all educational activity, and the influence of imported western civilisation, silently treading his way into such a difficult science as Mathematics. It is a unique experience in the department of national development to find a man really striving after knowledge for its own sake under difficulties whose magnitude is no less startling than the boldness of his attempt (Introduction to 'Siddhanta Darpana')*

Five remarkable qualities of Chandrasekhara, apart from his rare wisdom, are clearly perceptible from his noble living (a) He was striving, as Ray puts it, after knowledge for its own sake. This speaks of his 'Karma Sanyasa yoga'. The 'Gita' has upheld 'yoginah karmakurbanti sangam tyaktwa atmasuddhaye'. (Chapter 5 Verse-11). (b) Chandrasekhara was also quite humble in his approach. (c) Humility, however, did not trespass into his self-confidence. He was rather sure of his conviction. (d) Rarest among his qualities was his presentation as a totally surrendered devotee of the Cosmic Power, and

his writing in an unattached manner placing the entire presentation before the Lotus feet of the Lord. (e) Lastly he was very kind and concerned about the difficulties of his fellow beings.

His humility is clearly visible in the chapter ‘Upasamhara Varnananam’ (Prakasha 24) of ‘Siddhanta Darpana’:

*bhimasyapi parajayojudhibhaved buddhi bhramah  
syat muneh  
kadacitkataya pyatolpa vidusa masadrushanka  
katha  
tasmad yad yad suddha mantra ganitam yadva  
sahartham padam.  
tatsarvam parisodhayantu krutinah krutwanu  
kampammayi.*

(Verse 157)

At times, Bhima was defeated in the war. The saints and wise men may sometimes, commit errors. Not to speak therefore, of a person of little wisdom like me. Wherever there is any mistake in this book or any repetition having the same meaning, the wise men and experts may correct these themselves showing kindness on me. The humility of the seer-astronomer is unique and incomparable. This humility alone is the goal of all education. The didactic value of ‘Siddhanta Darpana’ for the society and the educational system is, thus, perceptibly clear. Later Sai has explained about humility in unequivocal terms, ‘In times gone by, universities were referred to as ‘homes of humility’ since humility was the characteristic of an educated person. Pride is the root of aggressiveness; it is the nature of wild animals. But the mark of man is humility in the presence of elders, teachers and parents. There is an ancient maxim which says, ‘Education imparts humility, humility ensures credibility, credibility brings wealth, wealth induces charity, charity confers peace and joy, here and hereafter’ (Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XIV P.173).

On the other hand, the poet-astrologer maintains his self-confidence and is sure of his own vision. He writes in ‘Siddhanta Darpana’ in the same Prakasha:

*brahmandakhanda bhanda sthiratara dharani  
mandala bhranti sounda  
prodandaim landadanta valavala dalana kuntha  
kanthiraba shreeh  
soyam neeladri singha nnwayavadana  
darinirgartah praptadurgah  
sphita swasya tirastu prathama viganita skandha  
sarah pravandah*

(Verse 158).

‘Siddhanta Darpana’ may be a thesis or a book. Amidst the three Skandhas of astrology, this is the best in astrological calculation. It is not easy to realise its inherent theme. Its author having born in the clan of Neeladri Singha, it emanates from his mouth like a lion. In this entire universe the earth is static. The lion denying its movement will overpower the arguments of western scientists whose arguments are like the acumen of an elephant. The glory of this Grantha may be increased further and further.

Chandrasekhara’s concern for the struggling humanity, ‘the milk of human kindness’ as Shakespeare puts it, is visible from the following incident. In 1866 the unfortunate severe drought took place in Odisha. Many people breathed their last due to starvation. Khandapara was also no exception to the cruel impact of this drought. At that time, unable to make both ends meet for the large family Chandrasekhara had, he approached the royal throne of Khandapara for some paddy. Fulfilling his wishes, the then king of Khandapara allowed four cart-full of paddy from the granary at Kantilo. Thirty one year old Samanta as he was at that time, while returning with paddy, many people and admirers met him on the road and greeted him. Coming to know about their poverty, kind-hearted

Chandrasekhara was deeply moved. He distributed three cart-full of paddy and returned home with only one cart-full of paddy. Truthfully, he explained the incident to his wife. When his wife told him that you had given away three cartful of paddy; otherwise we could manage three months more. With a smile in face, Chandrasekhara replied, 'perhaps you failed to understand. The three cartful of paddy given to the people only would be our future property. We may manage with the rest.' "Self-less giving, in the appropriate place, indeed, is human's future property. If such sacrifice exists in an overwhelming manner, in this age also, man can assume the dignified height of Harischandra" (Biography of Samanta, Sri Dayanidhi Khadiratna compiled 'Siddhanta Darpana' P.17).

Chandrasekhara was honoured as the Second Bhaskar by some scholars of that time. Be that as it may, starting from his 14<sup>th</sup> year working ceaselessly and self-lessly for 20 years with surprising austerity, he completed Siddhanta Darpana. His supporter and admirer, Prof. Joges Ch. Ray showed him a telescope quite at a very late stage, when the great scholar was old, sick, poverty-stricken. Breathing a heavy sigh, Chandrasekhara remarked 'If I could have got one such thing earlier how much convenient it would have been for me'. (Sri Raghunatha Singha Samanta 'Yugajanma Chandrasekhara' Ibid preface).

The Gita says, 'ya nisha sarva bhutanam tasyam jagarti sanjami'. When others while away their time in the pursuit of pleasure, the 'Sanjami' (self-restrained) remains awakened to his duties and responsibilities. Even in adolescence, instead of revealing the childlike playfulness, Chandrasekhara evinced immense interest in 'Jyotisa Shastra' (astrology). According to Raghunath Singha Samanta, the star world of

the 'Mysterious Controller of the Universe', its magnificent attraction and hidden knowledge kept Chandrasekhara engrossed from childhood. He was, indifferent to the worldly life. He was, 'Jyotih-loka-dhyani', 'Jyotih loka vilasi', 'Jyotirvid'. He was the fire in the sacred Jajna of perseverance associated with the studies of astrological science' (Ibid). The author himself has admitted that the sky, planets and stars have agitated his heart. (Prakasha 24, Verse 151)

The king of Manjusa, Jagannath Rajamani, the famous poet Radhanath Ray, Prof. Joges Chandra Ray, Vidyabhusan Dayanidhi Khadiratna, Sri Bira Hanuman Shastri, Sri Aruna Kumar Upadhyaya and other scholars have all tried in their own ways to bring the wonderful creation of this rural genius to the limelight. True, 'Mahamohopadhyaya' award could possibly be conferred on this great scholar due to the untiring efforts of Prof. Joges Ch. Ray. The soil of Utkal is immensely indebted to all these eminent personalities. But the real mystery of his twenty years' ceaseless efforts is unravelled yet. It needs scientific, objective and prudent research and further studies. The eminent scholars in the line may, as Samanta himself appeals in the Prathama Prakasha of 'Siddhanta Darpana' read, explore and bring to the world of knowledge some light that this great silent worker envisioned:

*siddhantadarpanesmin salochananam pratarpane  
nipunah*

*kwapi kwapi vishesam pasyata ganitagama gramat*

*(Verse-13).*

The sacred wish of Chandrasekhara was that the result of his prolonged perseverance should remain useful on the earth for very long time 'ayam granthah sphuratu ciramantah kshitalam' (Prakasha 24, Verse 152). In 24<sup>th</sup> Prakasha of 'Siddhanta Darpana' there also exists a 'Kautuka Panjika' which enables to know future

‘tirtha snana joga’ etc. quite earlier, ‘*kautukapanjikeyam mahopakarayasatam sadastam*’ (verse 65). In preparation of this, he made studies of the almanac prepared by his own father (24 Prakasha Verse 2).

Late Chandrasekhara Singha Harichandana Mahapatra Samanta, popularly known as Pathani Samanta, thus, shone in the sphere of nineteenth century astrological learning of the country like a star. Born on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1835 at Khandapara, he left for his heavenly abode on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 1904 (Saturday) in Puri while uttering the name of Lord Jagannath and taking ‘Mahaprasad’ from his son Gadadhara. Sri Raghunath Singha Samanta has mentioned about the same in ‘Yugajanma Chandrasekhara’ (Introduction to ‘Siddhanta Darpana’ compiled by Dayanidhi Khadiratna). For Chandrasekhara, who was born in the lap of noble souls, Shyamabandhu and Vishnumali, by the grace of Lord Remeswar, the ‘Time was Brahman’. According to him, the Lord is ‘Anadi, Ananta and incarnation of Time’. He has no end. He is above everybody. He is ‘Maha Iswara’. He is inside everybody; the ‘Infinite Divinity’ as later Sai puts it. He is exceptional and He exists as soul in every living existence. Chandrasekhara writes in ‘Siddhanta Darpana’ referring to ‘Kurma Purana’:

*anadiresabhogavan kalah anantah akrharah parah sarvagatwat swatantratwat sarvatmatwan Maheswarah parambrahma ca bhutani vasudevopi shankarah kalenaivacasajyante sa eva grasate punah*

(22<sup>nd</sup> Prakasha, verse 4 & 5).

(Time is Paramabrahman, Vasudeva and Shankar. Hence, Time creates the living beings. In course of time, this Time alone devours all existence).

A surrendered devotee, an unattached Karmayogi, Chandrasekhara has prayed with immense gratitude to Lord Sri Achyuta (Sri

Jagannatha), acknowledging the Lord’s blessings all through his work. He affirms that through remembering the Lord and uttering His name, penance, Jajna and all other dedicated spiritual Sadhanas get fulfilled without fail. He writes:

*sarveshu kaleshu samastadeshesu karyeshu tatha iswareswarascha sarveshwarupaih bhagavananadihmamastu mangalyavivrudhayehharih yasyasmrutya ca namoktya tapojajna kriyadisu nyunamsampurnatamjatisadyo vandetam achyutam*

(Ibid, Verse 6 & 7).

At all times, in all countries, in all works, Iswara exists as the Lord. He is Bhagavan, He is endless and is seated in the heart of all beings. He is adored as ‘Hari’. He has always blessed me for completion of my humble endeavour. I bow down before Him, Who is Sri Achyuta.

The world has seen many astrologers, astronomers, Mathematicians elsewhere also. But with the above scientific brilliance, such a God-intoxicated ‘Karmayogi’, a poet par excellence and a seer of highest order is incomparable in the modern history. Prof. Joges Ch. Ray writes in his Introduction that poverty had punched him in his old age and had compelled him to incur a large debt. He had given a lot many things to the society and world of learning. But it was unfortunate, not a single goodwill gesture of his endless struggle received genuine appreciation in his lifetime. History of English literature reveals that even centuries after his demise, Shakespeare was recognised as the highest dramatist and poet, the world had ever seen. History repeats at times. We may still hope that his book, his talents are given due and deserving honour being recognised both nationally and internationally. The saga of life of this great genius, was, indeed, a struggle all through as it usually happens to all rare talents. Joges Ch. Ray is very candid in his description:



*I do not pretend to express any opinion on the literary merits of his work but it appears to me that the metrical composition alone, apart from its value as a contribution to Hindu astronomy is such as to entitle him to a high place among the writers of Sanskrit verse of the present day. (Introduction)*

Bhaskar was his ideal master. It is said, Bhaskara had also followed Brahmagupta as his guide when writing his 'Siromani'. Chandrasekhara was the true disciple of his ideal preceptor. Chandrasekhara's respect for his Lord and superiors is explicit in the pages of 'Siddhanta Darpana'. He first offers his obeisance to Lord Jagannatha, then his ideal and Guru, Bhaskara, 'vande gurum Bhaskaram' (Prakasha 16, Verse 3). He acknowledges the benefit, he (the author) and the society have drawn from Bhaskar's 'Siddhanta Siromani'. He writes in the same verse:

*praksiddhantacayam pramayana naram  
mahahrahksharam  
yah siddhanta siromani pranigadannaprinayat  
praninah*

Bhaskara composed 'Siddhanta Siromani' since many ancient decisions appeared to him not correct. He had written about the details of planets in his time. By doing this he had done good to the society. Chandrasekhara has also expressed his indebtedness to Bhaskara, his preceptor. This speaks of Chandrasekhara's devotion to his Guru. He is also happy to note that his humble attempt to explore the science of astrology and astronomy was possible by the grace of Lord Jagannatha. He writes:

*mahahkincinneelachalanilayee leelakrutat jagat  
jagannathakshyam tanmanasi vinidhaya  
ghanadhanam  
tadeeyanu krosad grahaganitamakshyaravasat  
ahamkrurderica matititam golaganitam*

(Chapter 16, verse 4).

He meditates in his heart on the Sacred and Sublime Effulgence i.e. Lord 'Sri Jagannatha', the Lord who is also the Supreme Lord of Neeladri and Destroyer of all sins. This world is His (Lord's) play-ground. Samanta writes with profound gratitude that due to Lord (Sri Achyuta) Sri Jagannatha's grace, he has completed 'grahaganita' (astronomy) and has also attempted astrology thereafter.

Such respect for Spiritual Preceptor and such devotion, concern for humanity are, indeed, in the line of the Vedic tradition. Such scholars do rarely come upon this earth to help the humanity. Sri Achyutananda's 'Sunya Pothi' is an ideal example. (Orissa Review, July, 2011, P.130).

Samanta Chandrasekhara divided 'Siddhanta Darpana' in 24 Prakashas. Besides, Chandrasekhara had clarified that the entire 'Siddhanta Darpana' can be broadly divided into two principal divisions i.e. Graha Ganita i.e. Astronomy (Purvardha) and Gola (Uttarardha). Gola means astrology. (Purna Chandra Bhasa Kosa P.236). Altogether there are five 'adhikaras' in the Book. Besides, Chandrasekhara has also given a brief description of each Prakasha in Verse 66 to 91 of 24<sup>th</sup> Prakasha. The vital aspects of solar eclipse and lunar eclipse are described by the author in 9<sup>th</sup> Prakasha. In 10<sup>th</sup> Prakasha, he also refers to Baraharamihiracharya and his 'Brihat Samhita'. According to Chandrasekhara, however, during solar eclipse, the giver is the Sun and the receiver is the Moon. Chandrasekhara, time and again, acknowledges that whatever he wrote he did under the divine guidance of Lord Krishna seated in his heart. Lord Sri Jagannath was perennially seated in his conscience, Who inspired and guided him all through. The Lord is inexplicable indeed. This is evident from his writing : 'yenaham ha deetisthata mukharitah kasmaicit tasmai namah', (24 Prakasha Verse

144). He has also written earlier in the similar vein:

*hasanta mati sundaradhara svruttanetrasriya  
vasanta sishuchanda ruk sarada khanda pandu  
dyutee  
vasanta masitacale vividhadeshalokakule  
dishantam avayam bibhuum bhuban mangaksham  
bhaje*

(Prak. 10, Verse 37).

I adore Lord Sri Jagannatha who bestows fearlessness. His eyes are always alert to have the universal welfare. His eyes defeat the morning Sun and the full Moon of the autumn in their beauty.

It is axiomatic that this blessed son, born by the grace of of Lord Rameswar and the almighty Mother, Parvati who was keeping Lord Krishna all through in his heart, must have written whatever he felt wise for the larger interest of the society. The harmonious wisdom in his writing beggars all description. In fact, in ‘Siddhanta Darpana’ Samanta Chandrasekhara has given some valuable information not available in earlier solutions, ‘siddhanta nudita apihagadita ye ye vishesamaya’ (Prakasha 24, Verse 150). According to him time is of two types : eternal and janya. Parameswar is the eternal Time. The Parameswar, though unapproachable to speech and mind, incarnates Himself, bestowing kindness on his devotees. ‘Janya kala’ is born out of God, the Parameswara. Similar description was given earlier by Swayambhuva Manu. Chandrasekhara also holds that in ‘Brihat Jataka’ Suryanarayana is described as ‘kalatma’, that is why the Sun is accepted as the source of all powers. He (The Sun God) represents Parameswara. ‘Janyakala’ exists from the time of the creation till the Pralaya only. This is divided into nine categories, Chandra, Nakshatra, Savana, Baharspatya, Soura, Manava, Paityadaiva and Brahma (Prakasha 22, Verse 25).

Eventually, it is apt to say that the future generation may benefit by systematic and concentrative studies of the above masterly creation. His admirers may also do justice, if the valuable guidances enshrined in ‘Siddhanta Darpana’ are utilised for the greater public interest of the State, Nation and World, which primarily was the author’s vision. Samanta Chandrasekhara has clarified that Sastras are written for the welfare of the society and hence, there should not be any mystical approach (Gudharthabhava) in the same. In that event, all will not be interested in the same. So far as astronomy or astrology is concerned, it should be written in simple, direct and in a conceptually clear manner. As such, these are very difficult subjects. Hence there ought not to be any use of difficult word or word having implicit indication. He writes in ‘Siddhanta Darpana’:

*sashtrekrute yadi jagad vyavaharhetou  
gambhirata bhavati tat nikhila pravritih  
na syadtotra ganite sugamavidheye  
sabdasya patabamanadaraniyameva.*

(Prathama Prakasha, verse 10).

A, genius of multifaceted talents, Chandrasekhara was, thus, the ‘divine personified’ born on earth to assuage and mitigate the suffering of the people through astronomical, astrological and spiritual wisdom. His sole objective was to create a healthy and enlightened social environment. At the same time he had ceaselessly sung the glory of Lord Jagannatha, His ( the Lord’s) ‘vijaya vajjayanti’ and His Mahaprasada (Divine ‘Mahaprasada’) always danced before the writer’s eyes. According to the author, the Lord’s ‘Mahaprasada’ rescues man from rebirth. ‘yanmahaprasada paripuritodar karananah pabanah’ (Prakasha 20, verse 112). Hence it is not astrology or astronomy alone that he preached but he was also guiding the people towards salvation. The message of ‘Siddhanta Darpana’ will, therefore, cross the barriers of time.

Aryabhatta, Satananda, Bhaskara, Kamabhata and other eminent scholars have contributed to the field of astrology in their own ways. Chandrasekhara with due regard to all of them, and after carefully examining all their theses, has placed his own humble reasonings. At a time when modern scientific wisdom was unknown, he created a thesis which deserves very high esteem and profound appreciation. His calculations will stand infallible for million years from the date of their making as the 'poet-seer-astrologer-astronomer', himself, had envisioned, 'bhavishyat ayutav dantam naitevya iti me matih'; (Prakasha21, verse 53).

He was born in a small princely dominion like Khandapara where 'Nature seemed a dream of the Divine' (Savitri, 359). He remained all through, a silent researcher for whom 'Kartavyam karma iti' i.e. assignment enjoined by self (Atma) was extremely important and for whom writing such a difficult thesis as 'Siddhanta Darpana' was a 'Vedic nitya karma'. His perseverance continued for twenty years. He was free from desire. In him flashed, as Sri Aurovindo writes elsewhere, 'the power of self-knowledge and the pure objectless self-delight of self-realisation' (Essays

on the Gita P.109). The creator of 'Siddhanta Darpana' was indeed, one among millions. He worked and struggled in the solitude 'to hear the unheard and glimpse the invisible' (Savitri P.359). It is a fact that even after 107 years of his leaving for his heavenly abode 'a person of his kind' has not dawned upon this earth to explore in the proper manner the invaluable wisdom he created for us or move it further. Sri Aurovindo's vision for 'a diviner force' may also hold good in case of Samanta Chandrasekhara;

Whoever is too great must lonely live,  
Adored he walks in mighty solitude:  
Vain in his labour to create his kind,  
His only comrade is the Strength within.

(Savitri P.368)

Indeed, Samanta was 'an image made of heaven's transparent light', a 'bright pure image in a priestless shrine.'

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