



French Captain Albuquerque Beatow and the Lord Jagannath

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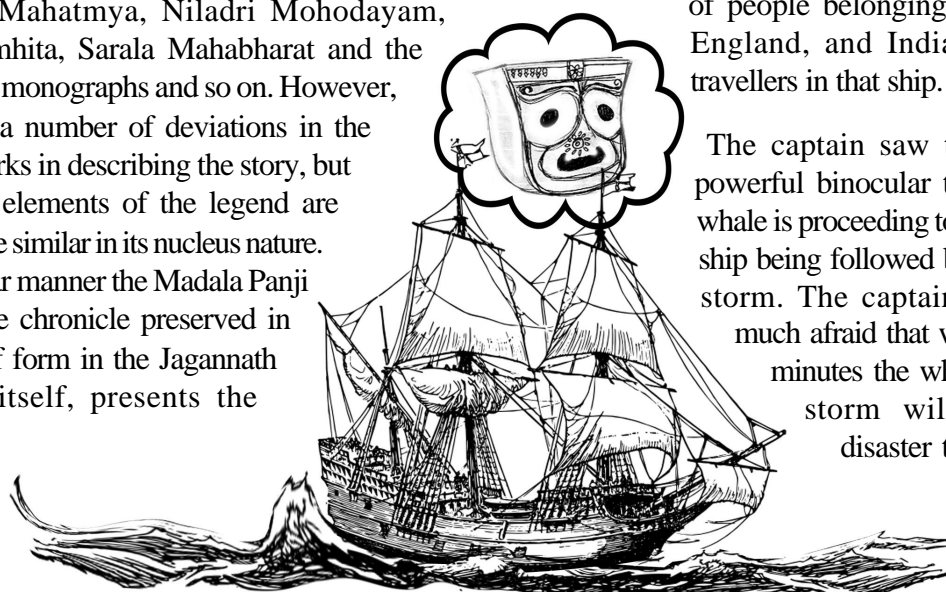
Various literatures and the Puranas never leave any room in narrating the origin and importance of Supreme God Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe who lives at Puri, the heaven upon the Earth. Therefore most popular legend among the traditional stories is the Maharaja Indradyumna legend which has been mainly described in the Skanda Purana, Utkal Khanda i.e. Purusottama Kshetra Mahatmya, Niladri Mohodayam, Kapilasamhita, Sarala Mahabharat and the Devlotala monographs and so on. However, there are a number of deviations in the above works in describing the story, but the main elements of the legend are found to be similar in its nucleus nature. In a similar manner the Madala Panji the temple chronicle preserved in palm- leaf form in the Jagannath Temple itself, presents the parallel account on this traditional story. Out of the numerous stories, this special story keeps the separate identity of Lord Jagannath in aboard. The event is as based on true story, which is as follows:

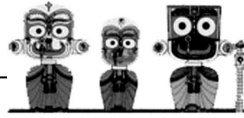
A French sailor who was coming to Pondicherry from Calcutta by his ship in eastern coast of India. The ship was only two miles away moving parallel from the shore of the Bay of Bengal and proceeding to the south. It would pass in its course through the parts of Chandipur, Paradip in Odisha. Then it would gradually reach Andhra Pradesh and Madras area. A number of people belonging to France, England, and India were the travellers in that ship.

The captain saw through its powerful binocular that a large whale is proceeding towards their ship being followed by a terrible storm. The captain was very much afraid that within a few minutes the whale and the storm will cause a disaster to the entire ship. So that he warned everybody

in the ship to adopt precautions for their lives at their own responsibility.

By listening such advice of the captain everybody was nervous. The captain personally





approached the people and became sympathetic for them. He saw there one man without being nervous was praying to a portrait of some deity. This made the captain surprised. He asked the person about what he was doing. The man replied, "Sir, now I am praying the Lord Jagannath of Puri to protect us." The captain was very much nervous at that time. He at once said "if your God can protect us, I will present Him a bell Kept here in His chamber".

It was a matter of strange that the captain saw through his binocular that the whale as well as the storm had changed their direction. However the ship was saved. After few hours the ship arrived at the seashore of Puri and immediately Captain presented the bell to Lord Jagannath which has intended to be sent to Pondicherry from France in 18th century.

Now the very bell is exhibited in the south of the main temple within the inner compound at Niladri Vihara with the following lines, carved on it in French:

IN LIBERATES DE PEDRO MOUDELL
COURT : DE LA COMP DE FRANCE ME
NOM ME PIERE"

A PONDICHERY 1746
BETPSALLAMINGEN
CANTA TIBUS

At last it can be said there are numerous legends heard on Lord Jagannath. Some of them are based on historical evidences and some are usually propagated by the staunch devotees. In some legends we also see the tantric miracles. Some legends are described in literature while others are just spoken of in the society. The people sometimes believe in these legends and when they are convinced that Jagannath is so powerful, they obviously come to Puri taking a lot of pain in order to see the Lord. In other words, this is a way to glorify the cult of Lord Jagannath.

References :

1. Yuge Yuge Jagannath 'G.P. Parija, P.132
2. Jagannath in History and Religious Traditions of Orissa, Gopinath Mohapatra
3. Shree Shree Jagannath Bhakta Charita Mala, Vol-I,II

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