

# Cities and Towns in Early Odisha: A Historical Appraisal

Sarita Nayak

In the long journey of historical interlude of India at least from sixth century BCE, we see the emergence of states, regional kingdoms and local chiefdoms having their principal city centres and capital cities and provincial headquarters. Though, the Early Historic is said to have begun as early as 1000 BCE in North India and the Ganga valley in particular (Allchin, 1995), the South Indian Early Historic is often defined little later – during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE. (e.g. Morrison *et. al.* 2005). However, from recent excavations (2017-18) at Keeladi near Madurai pushed back the emergence of urban life around 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE in South India. (Balkrishnan, 2019)

The beginning of second urbanization and emergence of large number of cities and towns are marked in sixth century BCE, which was the turning point in the history of India. It is during the early centuries of the first millennium BCE that *Janapadas* start evolving into political and cultural units. *Arthashastra* (II.1) defines *janapada* is a

territory occupied by immigrants from other regions or by surplus population of the ruler's own country. It is through such a process that new territories occupied and developed. (Tripathi and Singh 1991-92,). A *janapada* is simply a land or

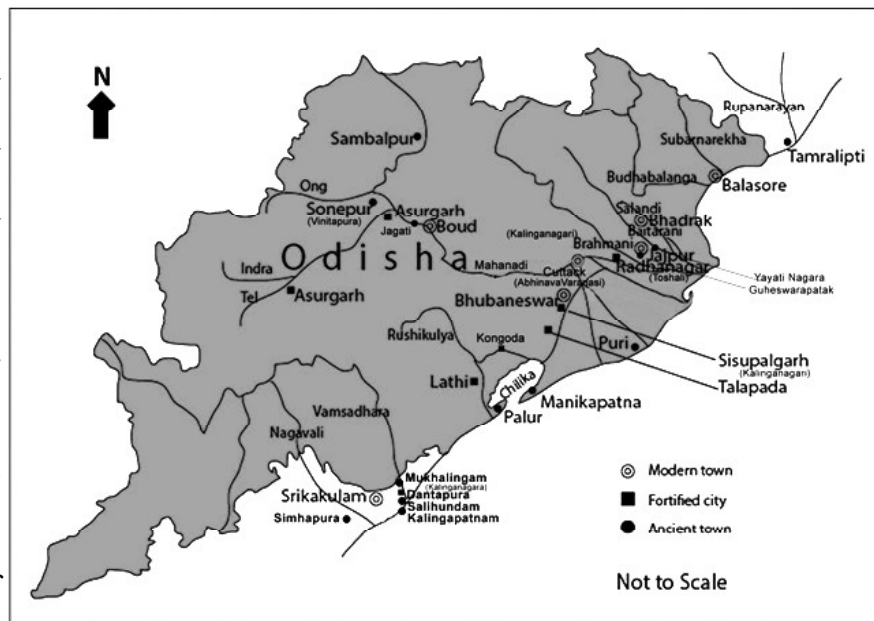


Fig 1. Ancient Settlements of Odisha

region inhabited by people which finds mention even in the Vedic literature. It is during the early centuries of the first millennium BCE that *Janapadas* start evolving into political units identified as *Mahajanapadas*. Magadha, Kasi,

Mithila, Anga, Kalinga, Avanti, Chedi etc were home to the clans contemporary to the Kuru-Panchal people of the Upper Ganga Plain. (Tripathi Vivha, 2019). During this phase many sources have been found on the dynastic history of kings or on the history of religious movements and their leaders. The religious movements of Buddhism and Jainism emerged in the Gangetic Valley during this period. The writings of the devotees of these two religions provide principal information on the settlements and brief descriptions of small and capital towns. During the time of Gautama Buddha, Champa, Rajgraha (Rajgir), Sravasti, Kausambhi, Vesali, Varanasi, Dantapura etc., were the capital cities which were centres of urban settlement. This phase as the historians termed it second urbanization first being the Mahenjodaro-Harappa. Toynbee says that a city should have a genuine community, defensive city wall, temple and a public hall. Mumford and Soberj have emphasized the role of political authority in emergence of towns. (Mumford 1961). Braidwood and Adams have given stress on cultural growth and cultural process respectively (Brainwood, 1950). Some of the literary sources like *Rigveda* and *Dharmasastra*, refer some capital cities. The *Arthasastra* of Kautilya, *Mahabhasya* of Patanjali, *Manusmriti* and the Epics and Puranas as well as Buddhist canonical texts and *Jatakas* refers to the capital cities and towns. (Sarao, 2010). The principal source for the study of towns in South India came from Tamil *Sangam* literature composed in between 500 BCE to 200 CE. When towns and cities emerged at the earliest phase of our historical period, we see capital cities were very famous with their kings and rulers. Kalinga *janapada* on the eve of Mauryan Emperor Asoka's invasion in 261 BCE was not only extended from the Ganges to the Godavari but also included the Vindhya region. The origin had a distinct identity of its own as Kalinga which once covered not only coastal Odisha but also the adjoining tracts of present West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh i.e major part

of Eastern Coastal region of India from the lower Ganges to the Godavari. Historical references as we know from Pliny, the royal city of Calingae was called Parthalalis which "had 60,000 foot soldiers, 1000 horsemen, 700 elephants keep watch and ward in precinct of war". (Thapar, 2002). In the Puranic Literature, the traditional western boundary of Kalinga was fixed at Amarakantaka hill. In the *Matsya Purana*, it is stated that the river Narmada drains the Amarakantaka, situated in the Western part of Kalinga. This account is supported by the later Puranas like Kurma and Skanda. It thus, appears that the Puranas refer to the extent of Kosala-Kalinga at the time when the two territories organized themselves as a strong confederacy against Magadha. (Sahu, 1964)

In recent times particularly in the last two decades number of early historical sites were subjected for archaeological excavation particularly after 1990 by different Agencies in Odisha. Now, many new evidences emerged with antiquities of much earlier period dating back to Mauryan era. There are certain cities discovered with archaeological spade and the town planning is also ascertained. Township was emerged in Odisha with Sisupalgarh, Radhanagar, Talpada, Samapa (Jaugarh), Dantapura (Dantavartanikota) which had the elements of town planning in grid system as known from excavations. Many major ancient towns were discovered and documented in India, some of them are Kaushambi, Rajghat, Sravasti, Mathura (UP), Eran, Ujjain, Vidisha (MP), Rajgriha or Rajgir (having 40 kms in circumference), Vaisali, Pataliputra (Patna) and some others. In the south, ancient cities like Kanchipuram, Madurai were also referred to. With coming of Mauryan Empire and the successive dynastic rule in India under Kushanas, Chedis, Satavahanas and Vakataks contributed towards rise of a number of capital and provincial cities. In the early medieval period again under Harshavardhan and Sasanka emergence of regional dynasties all over India gave birth to

number of historical cities. Very limited research has been made so far on the history of rise and growth of urban centres, cities and towns in Odishan context, since it requires field survey and study. Scholars in the past like Lal (1948), Mohanty and Smith (2007), Mishra (2019), Patnaik (2015, 2016) and few others have contributed and streamlined the area of research of Urbanisation taking together archaeological field data. Here, an effort is made to place the sites in historical context so that historical development could be ascertained so far history of Odisha is concerned. This paper is outcome of our field research work on Early Historic Settlements of Odisha during the year 2019-20.

Major cities were fed by a trade and luxury goods or hard commodities and by intangible services provided by a large number of professionals. In this context, we may see cities as indicators of economic growth and social change; different things in different historical periods and in regional context. When, we look into capital cities of the early historical period, the perception is to find out the archaeological remains in the form of fortifications, layout of the settlement pattern, building materials, drainages, and the usable objects such as pots, terracotta objects, coins, mould, weapons, scripts etc., as has happened in the discovery of all ancient cities in India and elsewhere. Similarly, medieval major cities are also looked upon on the references in the literature, inscriptions and the monumental remains on the sacred or profane spaces. In this context, an exploratory study is being undertaken to locate and redefine with historical geography and recent archaeological discoveries of some of the important major cities of ancient and medieval Odisha.

A parameter of thriving of these cities centers with ups and downs related to the spread of trade routes which was reflective of recurrent movements of circular migrations involving traders, pastoralists and pilgrims, who moved on

these routes for their own purposes. The assertions of authority were as apparent on these routes as they were in the settlements. These routes were well recognized by itinerants as well as the states through which they passed, and were referred to as *marag* in the records. This route in Eastern shore was connecting Kalinga with Pataliputra in North and Paithan in South and dotted with a number of Early Historical Settlements starting from Tamralipti, Moughalmari, Jayarampur, Radhanagar, Lalitagiri, Dhauri, Aragarh, Jaugarh, Salihundam, Kalingapatna, Ghantasila, Bhattiprolu. That Konda, Bhavikonda, Guntupalli connecting Krishna-Godavari valley up to Amaravati. The Ancient Odisha was in trade circuit and connected with royal routes of North and South India. This route is further connected to Suvarnabhumi or Southeast Asian countries with its maritime link which is termed as *Purviyapatha*. The *marag* had a life of its own, dotted with check posts as well as the resting places, monasteries, *sarais*, temples, shrines, water posts and often just a bit of shade for the odd traveller. (Patnaik and Nayak 2020) N.K.Sahu remarks that “The Sonapur-Titilagarh region appears to have been connected with towns like Dantapura and Pithunda in the coastal region of Kalinga on the one hand and Kausambi and Kasi in ancient Kosala (North Kosala) on the other hand” in 5<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE. (Sahu, 1964). The *Mahavamsa* speaks of the port of Tamralipti, from where Asoka gave farewell to his daughter Thero Sanghamitta when she sailed to Sri Lanka with the sapling of the sacred Bo-Tree. It seems that during his campaign against Kalinga and Kosala region the Maurya monarch marched from Pataliputra along the Ganges to Tamralipti and then after defeating the Kalingas, he proceeded up to the present Kalinga-ghat beyond which there was the land of the Atavikas. In 4<sup>th</sup> century CE., Samudragupta took an altogether different route during his South Indian campaign. He marched along the river Sone in to the present Madhya Pradesh and then after

entering Kosala took the course of the Mahanadi. After this, he proceeded up to Sonepur along the Mahanadi and then taking the course of the river Tel got into the Kantara Kingdom of Vyaghraraja. From there, he marched towards south-east and crossing the Kalinga-ghat entered Ganjam. But, with recent researches on archaeological explorations and decipherment of inscriptions and copper plate charters which all shed new light on these city centers. Accordingly, a fresh appraisal is made to get an overview of the cities and towns of ancient and early medieval Odisha.

### Radhanagar

Radhanagar in Dharmasala area of Jajpur district is located on the right bank of the river Kelua, a tributary of the river Brahmani, about 90 kms to the north of Bhubaneswar. The site is spread over an area of 9,02,500. Excavations were conducted in two phases, 1997-2007 and 2010-2013 by OIMSEAS. This is the first city center of Odisha excavated systematically for three sessions (2010-13) and brought to limelight the construction pattern of ancient city of India together with socio-economic life of ancient people of India in general and Odisha in particular. The city was flourished from 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE to 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century CE almost around 800 years. It is an example by itself so far South Eastern India is concerned. It yielded large number terracotta objects, coins and inscriptions of Maurya, Kushana period, the streets and residential houses and almost all related material culture of religion and trade. It is appropriate to identify as the Toshalinagar of Asokan period as referred to in the Edicts of Dhauli. The cultural sequence is as follows :

Period I is assigned to circa 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE. During last part of this period, the settlement entered into a stage of urbanization. In the early phase of this period morrum rammed floor levels have been found in the core area. A number of inscriptions, potsherds like NBP,

Rouletted ware, Knobbed ware have been recovered from this level. Seven numbers of silver Punch marked coins were retrieved. A conch pendent inscribed with three letters in Pre-Mauryan/Mauryan Brahmi read as 'Vijaya' is recovered from this level.

Period II started from 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE to 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE which was the most prosperous phase of the site. The most important feature of this phase is the remarkable progress in clay modeling, which was noticed in the discovery of a clay mould of a Buddhist image. Number of terracotta beads, iron implements, coins and potsherds like knobbed ware, rouletted ware, Red slipped ware etc. were collected. A pendent inscribed in Brahmi script reading as "Sadabhu Tissa" with swastika marks along with terracotta objects have been recovered.

Period III is dated from c. 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>CE to c. 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>CE. During this phase coarse grey pottery was used by the people at the site. (Patnaik, 2015). The antiquities and structural remains discussed above enlightened about the fortified site to be an important urban settlement that developed in the beginning of historical period in Odisha.

### Sisupalgarh

Sisupalgarh is one of the focused early historical fort site of the country and is the largest and best preserved early historic fortification in India. The interior measures 1125 x 1115 meters i.e. 125.4 hectare. The deep section shows a deposit of 8 meter. The site was excavated first by B.B. Lal (1948-49) and later by R.K. Mohanty and M.L. Smith (2004-07). This site is so vast and encroached leaving little scope for archaeological research and still excavated by Archaeological Survey of India and Deccan college. The result of the excavation is pushed back to 700 BCE to 350 CE. The structural remains such as gates, moats, pillars standing *in-situ* witness a fully urbanized culture. The findings of

knife, blades, daggers, arrow and spearheads, nails, sickles, ferrules of iron and exotic pottery like knobbed ware, NBP ware etc. which make us to understand about the demographic profile of the site. The reference of Hatigumpha inscription regarding Nanda's attack on Kalinga was also true. So the city of Sisupalgarh might have existed at that time. The town planning is unique with influence of Greek technology. Considering the antiquity with all traits of urbanization, this settlement proves to be the ideal choice of Kalinganagari as referred in Hatigumpha inscription of emperor Kharavela of first century BCE and continued till 4<sup>th</sup> century CE. This was one of the significant early cities of India and we still need more scientific research to unfold the historical truth.

### Talapada

Talapada is an early historic fortified urban site located 42 kms south of Bhubaneswar near Ramesvara in Khurda District. The site is a smaller version of Sisupalgarh. The site measures 25 hectares in size and is surrounded by a rampart measuring up to three meters in height. The excavation carried out during the season 2013-15, directed by R.K. Mohanty, Monica L Smith and P.P. Joglekar. Deep soundings enable archaeologists to get a "slice" of the complete occupational sequence of a site. The earliest levels of Talapada contain abundant examples of high-fired reduced and oxidized slipped pottery with designs such as circular ridged bowl bases and knobbed ware bases, some with graffiti on the underside. From the archaeological and structural remains of the site, it is clear that Talapada was an urban centre with all traits of urbanism and social formation during the period contemporary to Sisupalgarh from 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE to 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. Although, extensive excavation is felt necessary and so far, it could be a middle town in between Sisupalgarh (Kalinganagari) and Jaugarh (Samapa).

### Jaugarh

Jaugarh (known as Samapa of Ashokan Edict) situated near Purusottampur about 35 km north-west of Berhampur city in Ganjam District. It was one of the provincial fortified headquarters of Kalinga during 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE. P. Yule (2002-03) made an extensive survey of the fort and published it in the year 2006. The fortification around the town consisted of an earthen rampart reaching to an average height of 25ft and breadth of 70ft. It was square in plan, each side tiered by two gateways, approximately half a mile in length. The rampart is well preserved on its western side although in 1956 D. Mitra reported that the glacis measure 23.75 m extent maximal height. The excavation brought to light a number of materials such as plain pottery, painted pottery, knobbed vessels, iron implements, beads of shell, bone, agate, crystal, carnelian, quartz, etc. of remarkable workmanship. The punch-marked coins of the Mauryan age and Puri-Kushana coins were also collected from the site. The royal city lay out with fortification and inside the fortification the Asokan Rock Edict was engraved which otherwise points a town that attracts people from far of places might be a through fare since all the Edicts of Asoka was engraved on a strategic place of a royal highway. It is one of the provincial cities of 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE and again continued up to 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE.

### Narla-Asurgarh

Asurgarh, as the name suggests, appears to be the most important Early Historic settlement in the hinterland Odisha, located near Rupra Railway Station, about 2 km from the Narla village. The fort, square in plan, each side measuring 1200 m, had four wide gates in four cardinal directions, and at each gate was installed one guardian deity. The river Sandul flows by the western side of the fort encircled by a moat on three sides which is fed by a huge tank still existing

today. Perhaps, the palace was constructed at the centre of the fort.

The site was subjected for a limited excavation by the Department of History, Sambalpur University (Sahu 1982: 1-8), which revealed interesting results. The excavation at the site consisting of two small trenches, have revealed paved house floors, an array of ceramic types such as Black and Red Ware, Black Slipped Ware, Fine Grey Ware, Red Slipped Ware, Northern Black Polished Ware, and most probably Rouletted Ware, iron implements of war and peace, beads made of semiprecious stones, punch-marked silver and copper coins, terracotta figurines, glass bangles, amulets and ornaments. A hoard of 539 silver coins, belonging to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE. to the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE. and collected by the King of Kalahandi furnished considerable cultural data. The first group of coins (69) are assignable to the pre-Mauryan period, the second group (272) to the Mauryan epoch and to the Guptas. The coins found at the site indicate that there was probably a mint at the site for fabrication of punch-marked coins. The similarity of some coins of the punch-marked coins of Asurgarh with those found at Bijnor and Paila near Koushambi, and the similarity in texture of fabric of some pottery types of Asurgarh with those at Ahichhatra further indicate that there was a brisk trade during the Mauryan period between Asurgarh and prosperous towns like Koushambi and Ahichatra in North India as also with Sripura, Vidisha and Ujjain.

While narrating the historicity of the fort, Sahu (1982: 1-8) opines that Asurgarh bears a special importance as far as the Atavika people are concerned. These people find mention in the Ashokan Edicts and are considered to be constituted the fighting forces of Kalinga against Ashoka in his famous Kalinga war. The Atavika land comprised roughly the present districts of, Kalahandi, Bolangir and Boudh-Sonepur regions of Central and Western Odisha and Bastar in

Madhya Pradesh. It was an important recruiting ground for the veteran army of Kalinga even as early as the time of the Mahabharata war. Asurgarh seems to be the capital city and the most important centre of Atavika territory and the excavation amply indicates that the area was not underdeveloped during the days of Ashoka and the people had a high standard of civilization characterized by well-polished potteries of the Northern Black Polished fabric. No doubt, Asurgarh was an important political and commercial centre situated on the highway joining South Kosala and Mahakantara with Kalinga. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, the fort of Asurgarh appears to have belonged to king Vyaghraraja of Mahakantara whom Samudragupta claims to have defeated in course of his south Indian campaign. The excavation indicates that the fort area was deserted after 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> century CE. and as such, it may be said that Tusti was probably the last known ruler of Asurgarh.

The ceramic industry at the site comprises of dish, bowl and vessels. The dishes are in burnished Black Slipped Ware with inverted simple rim, thin wall, the vessels are in burnished Black Slipped Ware with complex externally projecting short beaked rim; in Red Slipped Ware with narrow mouth, concentric corrugation at the interior body and grey core. All types are of fine core. However, the site was further taken for archaeological spade by Archaeological Survey of India in the year 2018 -19. Some silver and copper rings and punch marked coins have been recovered and the ceramic industry remain same as discussed. But the cultural sequence is date back to pre-Asokan Period. The detail report is yet to publish.

### **Dantapura(Dantavakatrunikota)**

The capital Dantapura is mentioned in the Buddhist texts of *Dighanikaya*, *Mahavastu* and in the various Jatakas such as Kalingabodhi, Chulla Kalinga, Kumbhakara, Kurudharamma Jatakas. The Kurudhamma Jataka states that

Dantapura the capital of Kalinga was once badly affected by drought. The Pali text *Dathavamsa* (Tooth chronicle) states that a disciple of Buddha named Thera Khema, acquired the tooth remains from the funeral pyre of the Gautama Buddha and handed over to Brahmadata, the king of Kalinga. Brahmadata enshrined it in his capital city, which was known as Dantapura. In the Mahabharata, the city is known as Dantakura. Pliny described Dantapura as Dandagula or Dandagola (fortified town). The *Mahagovinda Sutta* of the *Dighanikaya* mentions Dantapura in Kalinga as one of the six famous cities of contemporary India. The Jaina works *Sutrakritanga* speaks of this capital city and its king Dantavakra, “the best of the Ksatriyas”. This *nagara* was the *rajdhani* (capital) of Kalinga country. Kings called Sattabhu, Kalinga, Nalikira and Karandu reigned from Dantapura. The references to Dantapura appear to be Mauryan and post Mauryan period. Perhaps earliest references whatever we got says that the city was the strong hold of Kalinga from earliest time up to 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century CE and lost its importance during Asokan period when Tosali emerges as one of the major provincials of Mauryas. But in later period, we again get a large number of references to the city in the copper-plate charters of the Eastern Ganga kings in the later period of about 7<sup>th</sup> century CE which seems that the old citadel was served for defense purpose under Eastern Gangas.

There is a site under the present name Dantavakatrunikota or Dantapura, well within the ancient geographical region of Kalinga. Dantavakatrunikota is located on the right bank of the river Vamsadhara near Rottavalsa in Srikakulam District. The archaeological mound still, some part is intact spread over an area of about 5 kms between two villages Rottavalsa and Ravivalsa in the Surbujilimandal of Srikakulam district. We have explored the site with a team of archaeologists from OMISEAS in the year 2016 and in March and October 2020. The site is

square in size with openings on four sides marked with gates. The circumference is almost 2 kms and surrounded by moat. The mud fort covers an area of 500 acres of land and the existing habitational deposit is of about 4 to 5 meters. The fortification wall raises about 35 ft high with thickness of about 60 ft. all around. Inside, the fortification several high mounds are marked. It appears that the site had four entrances on the four cardinal directions of which only western gate could be traced.

However, a small-scale excavation was conducted by the Department of Archaeology, Andhra Pradesh in the year 1998-2000. The excavation revealed a row of Buddhist stupas and ruins of brick structures as well as an earthen rampart surrounding the site. To know the foundation details of the stupa, the stupa was dug up to a depth of 5.60 mtrs and exposed 39 courses of bricks. At the foundation level, a circle of granite blocks were planted with a view to avoid dislocation of circular brick structure. Associated materials with brick structures of various kinds and pottery of that includes plain, decorated, single incised and stamped type, usually of wheel turned and well fired. The pottery includes northern black polished ware, rouletted ware, grey ware, dull red ware, red slipped ware and knobbed ware and the shapes are storage jars, vases, vessels, lamps-on-stand, dishes, lids deep bowels etc.

The site and excavated materials are very much akin to the early historical site Radhanagara of Dharmasala area of Jajpur District, Odisha. The cultural sequence is equally matching. The series of fortified ancient sites excavated in the last decade ranging from Radhanagara, Sisupalgarh, Talapada, Lathi and Dantapura and in between Jaugarh (Samapa) are in a single line and mostly located in the coastal area of Odisha or in the same the geographical orbit ancient Kalinga. The city planning with such a mud

fortification on the bank of the navigable river Vamsadhara supported by near port site Kalingapatnam and Salihundam presents an unique culture complex. The Archaeological exploration and excavation prove that it is fortified capital city Dantapura of ancient Kalinga and continued to be under occupation till 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century CE. It is the earliest most capital city of Ancient Odisha or Kalinga. Again we are getting reference of the city in the later periods under Eastern Gangas towards 7th century CE.

Several suggestions have been advanced in regard to the identification of this ancient city (EI, XXX,) but R. Suba Rao's identification of the 'ruined fort of Dantapura situated on the southern bank of the river Vamsadhara seems more probable (S. Tripathy, 2010). After the early period when Dantapura was the earliest capital of Kalinga even in pre-Asokan period but continued up to 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century CE as that of Radhanagar chronology. Dantapura was the ancient most capital site and its chronology must have pre-Mauryan and it was well described in the literature which confirms with the present location.

Now, let us concentrate the historical towns where we are getting information from copperplate grants and inscriptions. We are trying to locate these city centres on the basis available sources so far published. Since very few analytical works have been done so far to locate these urban /city centres, of course, our dynastic history is replete with long narration of about them. Here, an effort is made taking to gather all discovered materials from exploration, excavation, textual and oral and trying to identify them on historical method.

### Simhapura

Simhapura or Vijayasimhapura has been referred to as a capital city of Kalinga in ancient literature under the Matharas who ruled over the area in the modern district of Ganjam in Odisha

and Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh. *Mahavamsa* stated that Simhapura, capital of northern Kalinga, was founded by Simhavahu<sup>67</sup>. In the Tamil work *Manimekhalai*, Simhapura and Kapilapura are described as two capitals of Kalinga. *Mahavastu* relates the story of the Kasyapa brothers who ruled in the city of Simhapura. According to *Culavamsa*, Vajravahu the king of Ceylon (1054-1109 CE), who married Triloka-Sundari of Kalinga came to Ceylon from Simhapura. A rock inscription at Dambula (Sri Lanka) of Nissanka Malla, also known as Kirti Nissanka or Kalinga Lanakesvara (1187-1196 CE), claims his ancestry from Kalinga dynasty in India. Nissanka Malla was a powerful king of Sri Lanka and founded the capital City Poolunaruva (now a world Heritage Site) ruled almost 10 years and declares that non-Buddhist should not be placed in power in Sri Lanka to which the Kalinga dynasty was the rightful heir as mentioned in his rock inscription at Golopotha. He was born at Simhapura of Kalinga (Schober Juliane 1997). From the epigraphical sources, it is known that Simhapura was the capital of Kalinga during the rule of the Matharas. The city was under Satrudamanadeva, a feudatory of the Eastern Ganga king issued his Pedda-dugam plates from the city of Simhapura. A lithic record dated Saka 1100 (1178 CE) describes a gift for perpetual lamp to god Madhukesvara by the donor Erakammanayakuralu, wife of Vanapati Peggada of Simhapura. Hultzsch identified Simhapura as Singupuram, situated between Srikakulam and Narasamapeta. However, during early historical period from 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century, it was a capital city of Kalinga. The identification so far made to identify the Simhapura inferred from the sources discussed is convincing.

### Kalinganagara

Kalinganagara was the capital city of Eastern Ganga dynasty, which is the modern Mukhalingam on the river bank of the Vamsadhara, in present Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh bordering Odisha which was



earlier part of Ganjam district of Odisha. The regions speaks the earliest historical paradigm of Odisha.

Hastivarmana (577 CE), the third known Ganga ruler of Trikalinga, wrested away north Kalinga from Vighrahas and conquered south Kalinga from Prithivi-Maharaja of Pistapura and thus founded the Ganga kingdom of Kalinga. He built the new capital of Kalinganagara on the bank of the Vamsadhara and assumed the title of *Sakala-Kalingadhipati*. Hastivarmana, in fact was considered to be the real founder of Ganga-kingdom of Kalinga. The Early Gangas or Eastern Gangas established their capital at Kalinganagara identified with modern Mukhalingam in Srikakulam district only 30 Kms from Paralakhemundi and around 60 kms from Mahendragiri. Scholars also opine that the Gangas had a secondary capital at Dantapura identified with Dantapurakota near Kotavalsa (the same site of ancient capital of Kalinga), again on the bank of Vamsadhara. The region of Gangas was around the present Srikakulam-Gajapati District, otherwise known as the Eastern Gangas or Early Gangas and ruled from 496 CE to the middle of 11<sup>th</sup> century CE. The Chicacole plates of Indravarmana (Ganaga Era 146), states that “hail from the victorious city of Kalinganagara” which is the ornament of all the land of Kalinga that is embraced by the fingers of the waves of the water of the ocean, the Maharaj Sri Indravarmana, who has had the stains of the kali age removed by unceasing obeisance to Gokarnasvami, the sole architect for the formation of the universe, who has full-moon for (his) crest-jewel, (and) who is clothed with the coils of great serpents, (and) who dwells on the summit of the mountain Mahendra” and goes on narrating kings personal eulogy. It seems that Mahendragiri had already got its due importance in the cultural life of Kalinga people from the days of Eastern Gangas. After the accession of Anantavarmana-Vajrahastadeva in 1038 CE, the Gangas of Kalinga rose up to follow

a policy of aggressive imperialism followed by Chodagangadeva (1077 to 1147 CE), the grandson of Vajrahastadeva V. The Ganga empire extended from the mouth of the Godavari to the Ganges. They also shifted their capital from Kalinganagara (Mukhalingam) to Avinava Varanasi /Cuttack or Choudwar Cuttack to check the Kalachuri king Jajlladeva I's further eastward advance. The expansion of Kalachuri kingdom towards east might have prompted Chodagangadeva for shifting the capital from Kalinganagar to Yayatinagara or Varanasi-Kataka to check the advance of the Kalachuris. The transfer of the capital might have been affected in or before 1114 CE because by that time the western portion of the country was already occupied by Jajlla. K.A.M.Sastri also opines that Chodaganga had transferred his capital from Kalinganagara to Utkala territory by 1114 CE.

### Kongoda

The capital town of the Sailodbhavas was known as Kongoda. The name Kongoda was probably derived from the conjunction as well as the contraction of the words Kalinga and Odra. According to Hiuen-Tsang, who visited Kung-yu-to or Kongoda in about A.D.638, “the country was above 1000 li in circuit, and “contained some tens of towns which stretched from the slopes of the hills to the edge of the sea”. By the time of the visit of the Chinese pilgrim Kongoda had just emerged as an independent kingdom and was bidding for a mighty political career. We find reference of to the term the Buguda plate of the Sailodbhaba king Madhavavarman and in the eighth line of the Ganjam plate of Madhavaraja. Kongoda the earliest reference to this town is found in the Khandiapada-Nuapalli plates of Chharamparaja. The Ganjam grant of Madhavaraja reveals that Kongoda was located on the bank of the river Salima which has been identified with the modern river Salia. SnigdhaTripathy locates the town of Kongoda in the area around Banapur which is

now situated on the bank of the Salia four kilometers from the Chilika. She points out that “the township is now noted for several ancient temples and sculptures and other antiquities of great historical importance.” Scholars give different explanation to justify this name.

From the Ganjam copper plate grant of Madhavaraja II we get *prasasti* "*Caturdadahisalila vici-mekhala-nilimayamsa-dvipa-giripattanavatyam* ..... " which suggests that Kongoda probably had influence over the islands (*dvipa*) of Eastern Seas. S.C. Chandra observes that the Sailendras of Suvarnadvipa are supposed to be the Sailodbhava emigrants of Kongoda (Behera 2007: 195). Historians are of opinion that it is likely that the Sailodbhavas being hard pressed between the Bhaumas of Utkala and Early Gangas of Kalinga would have migrated to Indonesia. The Mahayan Buddhist Art of the Sailendras of Java has strong affinities with the early medieval Odishan art particularly of Bankada and Ratnagiri. The art and architecture developed under the Sailodbhavas now scattered around Banpur area. The archaeological remains that found at Bankada, Punjiama, Achutarajpur, Niladriprasad testifies the fact that the landscape on the bank of the river Salia was once a capital with forts, ports, palaces and temples.

### **Guhadevapataka**

Guhadevapataka is the capital city of Bhaumakara dynasty. Guhadevapataka or Guhesvara Pataka or Viraja or Abhinava Yayatinagara, situated on the bank of the river Vaitarani has a glorious antiquity since the time of the Mahabharata. This place is identified with Guhira Tikra which is about 5 miles from Viraja or Jajpur and the immediate neighbourhood of Khadipada (Buddhist sites). Tikra, the second part of the name *Gohira Tikra*, means a mound and the first part of the name Gohira seems to be a corruption of Guhesvara. Guhadevapataka or

Guhesvarapataka was most likely associated with Guha or the Guhas mentioned in the puranas and the Mahabharata as the rulers of Kalinga, Mahisya (Midnapore) and the Mahendra mountain. From the Buddhist chronicle *Dathavamsa* that a king named Guhasiva was ruling over Kalinga during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. The name of Guhasiva was retained by the capital city of the Bhaumakaras known as Guhadevapataka or Guhesvarapataka which is located in Jajpur.

The origin and inference of the name of the capital from Guhasiva as advocated by the scholars seems feasible as the term Guhasiva, Guhadeva, and Guhesvara are identical. The identification of Guhadevapataka or Guhesvarapataka with Jajpur is supported by the, Badakhemandi Plate of Jayavarmadeva of Svetaka. From this copper plate, it is known that the donor was a feudatory of the Bhauma-kara ruler Sivakaradeva I Unmattasimha who had his residence at Viraja or Jajpur. It is again corroborated by the Chaurasi Plate of Sivakaradeva-II which states that the grant was written and heated by Harivardhana, a resident of Viraja. K.C. Panigrahi has established its identification at Gohira Tikra, situated about five miles to the north of Jajpur. The Hanisesvara temple inscription of Madhvidevi, queen of Subhakaradeva I, provides some evidences for setting the exact location of the Bhauma-kara capital. The temple inscription reveals that the queen built the Madhavesvara temple, dug a tank and established a market at a nearby place.

All the copper-plate grants of the Bhaumakara rulers were issued from this place which is called Guhadevapataka in the earlier inscriptions and Guhesvarapataka in the later. The place is described in these inscriptions as a Java-skandhavara, means a camp of victory, has often been used in medieval lexicons in the sense of a capital. The place is generally identified with present Jajpur. According to B. Mishra, the name Guhadevapataka owes its origin to a non-Aryan

is named Guha, reputed in the Puranas as the savior of the peoples, including the Kalingas, Mahisyas and Mahendra Bhaumas, inhabiting the Mahendra mountain. In the Mahabharata, the sanctity of the Vaitarani river mentioned a place fit for pilgrimage. The *Gayasura Mahatmya* section of the Vishnu Purana alludes it is the famous Nabhigaya where lies the naval portion of the demon Gaya. K.C. Panigrahi records a Sanskrit verse, which is still recited at Nabhigaya at the time of offering *pinda*, mentioning that the Somavamsi king Yayati Kesari celebrated ten *Asvamedha* sacrifices at Jajpur with the help of ten thousand Brahmanas, brought from Kanauj. A quay, called *Dasasvamedha ghata* may be noticed even now at Jajpur. Hence, Jajpur and its vicinity is the appropriate location of the capital of Bhaumakaras.

### Vinitapura (Binika)

Vinitapura has been identified with Binika on the river Mahanadi in Subarnapur District. Vinitapura is regarded by some scholars as the headquarters of the Somavamsi kings of South Kosala in early 10<sup>th</sup> century CE. The Somavamsis had been forced to shift from their earlier capital from Siripur (Chhatisgarh) to south Kosala (modern Sambalpur, Balangir, Sonepur Districts) after occupation of Kalachuris. The earliest known record of the dynasty was issued by Janmejaya from Suvarnapura or modern Sonepur. The Gopalpur charters of Janmejaya I, describe Suvarnapura on the bank of the river Tel as *Mahakatka* decorated with conch-shells, sea-shells, pearls, gems, corals and gold. It was here that Janmejaya was coronated as king in the midst of Indradhvaja festival. Suvarnapura continued to be Janmejaya's *Vijayakataka* from where he issued the copperplate grant of his tenth regnal year, donating village Jollamara in Luputtura khanda to Mahabhataraka Sadharana in favour of Lord Jalasayana Narayana, the only Somavamsi charter known to have contained a

*Vaisnavamantra*. King Janmejaya elevated Suvarnapura as his capital. The Kalibhana plate of Janmejaya was issued in his 34 regnal year and the place of issue of the grant is mentioned as *Suvarnapura-Vijayakataka* which indicates Suvarnapura-Kataka only.

King Yayati I, the son of Janmejaya made Vinitapura his capital and resided there up to his 15<sup>th</sup> regnal year. This Vinitapura has been identified with Binika which was prosperous capital town on the bank of the river Mahanadi near Suvarnapura. The Maranjumura plates of the third year of the reign of Mahasivagupta-Yayati discovered from the village of Dungri in Sonepur state and charter was issued from the Royal camp at Suvarnapura. The first part of this inscription states that Mahasivagupta-I was the conqueror of Karnata, Lata (Gujrat), Gurjara, Kongada, Utkala, Kosala, Gauda and Radha and perhaps Dravida; that he had conquered Kalinga, Kongoda, Utkala, Kosala, Gauda and Radha and that he had earned the title *Tri-Kalingadhipati* with his own arms. The second record of the king is the Patna Plates of the year eight; they were issued from the Royal camp at Vinitapura and record the grant of some village of Talakajja with a river named Turadassanariya in Kosala country to a Brahmana named Kamadeva of Kasyapagotra. The third record of this king, the Kataka plates of the ninth year refers place names. The first part of this inscription is in verse and name of the place from which the charter was issued is introduced in prose after the fourth verse as *Tasmat Sri-Vinitapurat* 'from Vinitapura'. The next three verses devoted to Janmejaya and his son Yayati. The king's name is given towards the end of the inscription as Yayati. The most important point established by this inscription is the fact that in the ninth year of his reign Mahasivagupta-Yayati had obtained possession of a portion at any rate of the flat plains of Odisha. Yayati- I was successful ruler and became master over the entire Bhauma kingdom of Tosala mostly

north and coastal Odisha towards 945 CE and the newly acquired territory came to be known as Utkala. Further he shifted his capital from Suvarnapura to Vinitapura, identified with modern Binika, but later on he made Yayatinagar his capital by his 24<sup>th</sup> regnal year in 949 CE. According to some scholars (E.I. Vol. XI) Yayati-I renamed Vinitapura after him; yet some others identify Yayatinagara with modern Gandharadi (Jagati) near Boudh where twin temple of Siddheswar and Nilamadhav with Siva and Vishnu housed in one platform. It is perhaps Vinitapura was renamed as Yayatinagar. Yayati-I was referred to re-establishment of Jagannath temple at Puri which became another provincial religious town. K.C. Panigrahi remarks "Yayati's work at Puri was both Political and religious and meant to be spectacular. Yayati I, united Kosala and Utkala politically and culturally and can be regarded as the father of modern Odisha.

However, after 15<sup>th</sup> regnal year Yayati-I shifted his capital to a new place and named it after him as Abhinava Yayatinagar (Jajpur) after occupation of Utkala which was also known as Tosali. The kingdom of Tosali was divided into large administrative units viz., Uttara (North) and Dakshina (South). The country of Utkala was under the rule of Bhaumakaras before it was merged with Somavamsi kingdom. Under Yayati II the kingdom of Utkala and Kosala were united under one scepter. From the Sonepur plates of Kumara Somesvaradeva, we know that the united kingdom of the Somavamsi kings was divided into two parts namely Utkala and Kosala during the time of Udyotakesari. He had appointed Abhimanyu probably his grandfather to rule over Kosala from Vinitapura and he himself ruled over Utkala from Yayatinagara.

### **Yayatinagara**

It is strange in Odishan history that Yayatinagar was regarded as the capital of Somavamsi both Binika and Jajpur. Yayatinagara

is the earliest known capital of Utkala during the Somavamsi dynasty. From his 15<sup>th</sup> year Yayati I shifted his capital from Vinitapura to Yayatinagara. Hiralal and R.D. Banerjee are of the opinion that Vinitapura was renamed as Yayatinagara during the reign of Mahasivagupta-Yayati I. Fleet considers Yayatinagara to be a fanciful name of Cuttack and is critical about its location at Jajpur, the inscriptions imply that Yayatinagara stood on the Mahanadi river, whereas Jajpur is situated on the Baitarani, about 50 miles away from the river. Even N.K. Sahu also supports this identification with location of a village called Jakatinagara and locates Yayatinagar between Gandhatapati mandala and the right bank of the river Mahanadi.

B. Mishra opined that, Yayatinagara was in the vicinity of Sonepur where from abundant archaeological materials have been unearthed. The king Mahasivagupta Yayati III Chandihara founded this city and named it after him. The place has been identified with places by different scholars. Some have suggested its identification with Binka in the old Sonepur State.

But B. Sharma (p.26.) concludes that Yayati-I in his 9<sup>th</sup> regnal year granted the village Chandragrama in the Marda visaya of Dakina Tosala. Now, writes Sharma Yayatinagar may be identified with Choudwar in the district of Cuttack. She further states Yayati might have chosen that place because of its natural location. Enemies had to reach the capital crossing the Mahanadi which was a principal natural barrier. The Kudopali plate of Mahabhavagupta II, discovered from the village Kudapali in Bargarh district was issued from Yayatinagara. The charter issued by a feudatory of Mahabhavagupta-II, named Mandalika and Ranaka Punja, son of Voda, of the Mathara family. Punja the feudatory of Mahabhavagupta II allies Bhimaratha is mentioned as being resident of Yayatinagara.

Dr. Sircar says, Jajpur seems to be a corruption of the name Yayatipura, which is again practically the same as Yayatinagara. Yayatinagara

figures as the capital of the Somavamsi kingdom in the 24<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Yayati's reign. Jajpur is taken to be a Yayatipattana or Yayatinagara on account of Yayati II. Scholars like K.C Panigrahi, B. Das opined that when the Somavamsi kings succeeded the Bhaumakaras they transferred their capital from Vinitapura to Viraja and renamed it as Abhinava Yayatinagara which seems more appropriate. Some scholars say Yayatinagara is located in South Kosala. Tirumalai inscription of Rajendra Chola refers that the capture of Yayatinagara, the Somavamsi king led to the conquest of *Oddavishaya*. From this it becomes clear that Yayatinagara was not situated in Kosala, as Rajendra Chola moved to Kosala after the capture of Yayatinagara through Odra. Dhoyi, a court poet of king Laxmana Sena of Bengal had given a beautiful description of the city of Yayatinagara where tall *Gauvaka* trees were found entangled by creepers of betel leaves in his *kavya*, *Pavandutam*. On the basis of his description also Yayatinagara could be identified with Choudwar, a place of strategic and archaeological importance.

Literary evidences also prove as K.C.Panigrahi refers that the existence of a Yayatinagara in Odisha. *Madalapanji*- Sree Jagannath temple chronicle mentions Abhinava-Yayatinagara, in connection with events stated to have taken place during the reign of the Ganga king Anangabhimadeva III. The context in which writes K.C. Panigrahi, this place name has been used, and leaves no doubt that by Abhinava-Yayatinagar, the chronicle means modern Jajpur. Jajpur has been described as Yayatinagar in the Odia literature even up to eighteenth century, notwithstanding the fact that in all Muslim sources the name had long been changed into Jajnagar. The Chola record, indicates that Dharmaratha was appointed to rule over Odisha with his capital at Yayatinagar or Abhinava-Yayatinagar, is proved by several evidences. The Somavamsi kings Uddyotakesari and Karnadeva issued their

copper-plate grants from Yayatinagar which cannot be taken to Yayatinagara of Kosala country, because when these grants were made, the former had assigned Kosala to Abhimanyu, probably a prince of the Somavamsi Dynasty, to rule over it and the latter had lost Kosala. It appears that after the occupation of Odisha Yayati-I established 'secondary capital in Odisha and this capital was also known as Yayatinagar situated in Kosala, but appointed viceroys, generally the princes of the same dynasty, for Odisha to rule from Abhinav (new) Yayatinagara. This arrangement appears to have lasted up to the reign of Yayati II when the position became reversed. Since his reign the Somavamsi kings lived in Odisha and ruled from Abhinava-Yayatinagara and appointed their viceroys for Kosala, who ruled not from old Yayatinagara, but from Suvaranapura, which states that Kosala country had been assigned to Abhimanyu by Uddyotakesari.

Odia Mahabharata written by Raja Krishna Simha in 18<sup>th</sup> century mentions that anybody who visits Yayati-pattana, gets the same merits as accrued from performance of the *Asvamedha* sacrifice. There is a tradition still current in Odisha, particularly at Jajpur, that Yayati-Keshari brought ten thousand Brahmins from Kanauj and performed ten *Asvamedha* sacrifices. There is still a *ghat* on the Vaitarani river at Jajpur known as *Dasasvamedha Ghat*. A group of Sapta-matrika images enshrined in a temple on this ghat and under worship still.

#### **Abhinava-Varanasi Katak**

Chodagangadeva succeeded in occupying Utkala by defeating the Somavamsi king before 1108 CE as known from Mukhalingam inscription. (Epigraphia Andhrika, Hyderabad, IV.) However, he allowed the Somavamsi king to rule over Utkala after reinstating him as a vassal. Chodagangadeva annexed Utkala permanently to the Ganga

kingdom, transferred his capital from the ancestral capital Kalinganagara identified with Mukhalingam to Kataka (Cuttack) which they called Varanasi Kataka. (Panigrahi 1981). Not only he proclaimed hegemony of the Gangas, but also united Kalinga and Utkala under one authority. The Ganga rule lasted for over three centuries with 14 generations from the capital Avinava Varanasi Kataka. The Gangaswer also built strong forts at Jajpur, Amaravati (near Chatia), Choudwar, Cuttack and Sarangagada or Chudongagada (near Barang) known as pancha-Kataka.

Abhinava Varanasi Kataka was the nerve centre of political and economic activities under the imperial Gangas and Gajapatis. According to tradition found in the Madalapanji, one day the king crossed the river Mahanadi to offer worship in the temple of Visvesvara Siva, situated in the village of Barabati. There he saw that a hawk was killed by a heron. The king was struck by this unusual sight and he decided to shift his residence (Kataka) from Choudwar to that village. Because of the presence of the temple of Visvesvara Siva, he renamed the place new (Abhinava) Varanasi. P. Mukherjee, "The Barabati Fort, Cuttack, 1990" in Cuttack One Thousand Years, Vol. II, section III, p.55. The Madalapanji informs that Anangabhimadeva III constructed a fort at Barabati village and established his new capital there. It was named Abhinava Varanasi Kataka. Varanasi-Kataka is mentioned in an inscription at Simhachalam belonging to the time of Chodagangadeva dated Saka 1035 i.e. 1113 CE. So Varanasi Kataka was famous since the time of Chodagangadeva. Anangabhima III probably rebuilt the fort and the royal residence. It was renamed as Abhinava Varanasi Kataka. Thereafter the capital was known in its new name. (Mishra and Samal, 2010). The Nagari Copperplate describes that Anangabhima Deva III (1211-1238 CE) transferred his capital from Choudwar to Abhinava Varanasi Kataka.

According to the land grant of 1230 CE by Anangabhima III, the occupational group inhabiting the township covering *thirtyvati* (375 acres) were perfumer (*gandhika*), dealer in conch shell (*sankhika*), goldsmith (*suvarnkara*), brazier (*kamsakara*), seller of betel leaf (*tambulika*), maker of jiggery (*gudika*), weaver (*tanturvaya*), fisherman (*kaivarta*) etc. The palace at Varanasi-Katak was divided into two parts, the inner part and outer part. There was a temple of Lord Jagannath in the inner part of the palace. The king held audience in this part in a grand pavilion adorned with figures of maidens. Anangavimadeva might have transferred his capital from Choudwar to Varansi-Kataka after building the Barabati fort. There are two sets of Copper Plate of Narasimha Deva IV refers Srinavara (Royal –Palace) at Varansi-Kataka. The king used to grant audience to his ministers and high officials on a grand decorated and terraced pavilion. There were many attendants in the inner palace controlled by an attendant –in-chief. Entrance to the inner palace was regulated and checked by superintendent. (K.B.Tripathy, 1990)

The excavation of the Barabati fort also has yielded remnants of a temple, pillars of a palace, cannon ball, arrowheads and other associated structures pointing towards the existence of a city in the second and third decade of thirteenth century. (B.K. Sinha, 1990) Madalapanji also reveals same evidence therefore it can be said that Cuttack town as capital of a Kingdom was founded by Anangabhimadeva in 1211 CE (Joshi, 1979). Simachalam Temple Inscription, Saka 1377 (1455 A.D.) and Madalapanji, the Temple Chronicle of Lord Jagannath, records it as Varanasi Kataka. (Mukul Rao, 1987). Abhinava-Varanasi or Abhinava-Varanasi-Kataka, mentioned in some of the Imperial Ganga records, which has been identified with present Cuttack. It is bounded by the Mahanadi in the north and the Kathajodi in the south. One of the land grants of Anangabhima III helps us confirming the location of the city, while

staying at Abhinava-Varanasi, the king took a sacred bath in the Mahanadi between the temples of the gods Citresvara and Visvesvara in the Saka year 1151 (1230 CE). D.C. Sircar observes, 'As the contraction of the name Varanasi-Kataka was both Varanasi and Kataka (Cuttack).' Varanasi-Kataka is mentioned in the Nagari plates of Anangabhima III as the seat of government of Imperial Ganga kingdom. Anangabhima III is the earliest known king among the Imperial Gangas to have issued charters from Cuttack. The Madalapanji states that Anangabhima, who dedicated his kingdom to the god Purusottama-Jagannatha, resided at Chaudwar-Kataka on the Mahanadi river, whereas, his younger brother and successor, also called Anangabhima, transferred his residence to Varanasi-Kataka, where he built a village called Barabati, on the southern bank of the Mahanadi. It is known from his land grants that Anangabhima III installed the god Purusottama at Cuttack in 1230-31 CE. D.C. Sircar observes that, 'the idea underlying the installation of a substitute of the god Purusottama-Jagannatha of Puri at Cuttack is apparently the same that inspired Sivaji to install a substitute of his patron deity, the goddess Bhavani of Tuljapur near Osanabad in the present Hyderabad State, in his newly built fort at Pratapgarh near Javeli. Apparently, the Ganga king wanted to live constantly in the company of his patron deity at his residence at Cuttack.' Kamarnava VII, son of Chodagangadeva who ruled about 10 years and performed *Tulabharam* ceremony. He is known to have built a temple named Jatesvara identified with modern Jhotesvara temple at Choudwar.

The first inscription engraved at Arual Perumal temple was engraved in the 19<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Anangabhima III. This inscription records the donation of the village Udaiyakamam in the Anatarudravisaya for the worship and offerings to the lord Allalanatha. The donation was made by Somladevi, the queen of Anangabhimadeva

III while staying at Abhinava-Varanasi-Kataka. The date of this inscription according to Mahalingam is 20<sup>th</sup> March 1230 CE. The commenter of the famous Sanskrit literary epics (*Mahakavyas*), Mallinath (1400-1537 CE) wrote a commentary on *Ekavali* written by Vidyadhara at Varanasi Kataka. The work glorifies the achievements of king Narasimhadev. The Kandavidu copper plate of Gandeve refers the capital city Kataka on Mahanadi and is vied with Indra's Amaravati. Next, we come across an inscription of Purushottam Deva of the Gajapati dynasty corresponding to 1485 CE found on the right side of the Jaya-Vijaya doorway of Sree Jagannath Temple, Puri which refers that this was promulgated before the dignitaries by the king on 18.08.1485 during his principal audience at the building to the south of 'Gopalpriya' shrine in the Royal Palace at 'Varanasi Kataka'. Another bilingual stone inscription of Mohammad Takki Khan, the Muslim Governor at Cuttack c.1730 CE on the inner side of a big well in village Vidyadharpur near Cuttack. This epigraph records the construction of a big well for the benefit of pilgrims to Puri near the pilgrim's road on the occasion of Ratha Yatra. The reference from Ain-i-Akbari clearly denotes that Cuttack was a flourishing capital city during the time of Mukunda Deva. On the eve of Afghan occupation, Cuttack was found to be a well-guarded and heavily fortified capital. The Afghans however were not destined to rule Odisha and they were soon ousted by the Imperial Mughals. Cuttack continued to be the capital of Mughal Odisha and Abul Fazal clearly mentions that Mughal Governor was residing in that city.

During the rule of the Marathas, Cuttack greatly prospered as an emporium of trade and commerce and became a central market for exchange between the Marathas of Nagpur and the English merchants of Bengal and Northern Sircar. As per the treaty of Deogaon, Cuttack came under British occupation in 1803 and the English set themselves to the task of consolidation

and land revenue administration. As an after effect of the devastating famine of 1866, the government gave serious consideration to remove the isolation of Cuttack from the outside world and at the same time to prevent the recurrence of such calamities in future. Along with several water ways, roads were also opened during the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to provide Cuttack with internal communication. Then towards the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, railway line of BNR connected Cuttack directly with Madras and Calcutta. From this day onwards Kataka or Cuttack remained as capital of Odisha till first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The history and heritage of Odisha is revolving all with these cities which shed the romantic life of Odisha State. The cities as discussed not only our witness to the socio-economic-political and religious upheavals but say about of our journey from great cities of 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE (Dantapura) to Abhinav Varansi Cuttack in 20<sup>th</sup> century. Once one visit, the city centers and just have a look to the archaeological remains and epigraphical evidences one, could very well understand the whole of Odisha from Kalinga to Utkala, from Kongoda to Kosala, from Odra to Odisha. The journey of our history is the reflection of the march of civilization as is visible from ancient settlements scattered around the geographical orbit of modern Odisha and only history and historians of our past and modern time can able to tell the truth and this is the relevance of history in modern times.

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Sarita Nayak, Lecturer in History (Ancient Hist. & Archaeology), Salepur (Auto) College, Salepur, Cuttack,  
 E-mail : saritaynayak.bitu@gmail.com