



Worship of Lord Jagannath

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Though it is horns of dilemma to reconstruct the history of Orissa from the treasure house of antiquity one typical aspect of this antiquous history has been Orissa's assimilation with the tribal cultures. The history of the tribes must be viewed in an orthogonal relationship to Indias core-values. In the context of Orissan history the worship of lord Jagannath shows the intellectual development in the arena of



religious segments. V. Ball was the first archaeologist to come up with findings of pre-Historic evidences of Orissa (1875) which reveals the fact that in ancient times or most remote past Orissa was not a civilized region. Mostly it was populated by the non-Aryans among whom the savaras were the most dominate in the field of social harmony, kinship and in the political organization. Specifically it should be clarified that 'Savara' is a genetic term applied to all the tribal folklore of Orissa. The racial homogeneity and the great deal of language similarities, thus gives Orissa an

interest spectrum. The worship of Lord Jagannath was started in a very traditional manner by the tribes. So scholars like B.M. Padhi, J. Padhi, K.C. Mishra, S.N. Rajguru and a few others have admired that the theory of tribal origin of the worship of Jagannath is

accepted by them as the God called Jagant. This is no doubt the origin of the worship of Jagannath. The intellectual interpretation by R. D. Banerjee

suggested that it is a modern Hindu Tirthas & one among the four dhamas in India. D.C. Sarkar has rightly pointed out that Purusottam Jagannath at Kambukshetra, like Venkateswar Ballaji at Tirupati, Minakshi at Madurai, Vindhyabasini at Mirzapur, Kamakshya at Guwhati of Assam and a number of Gods and Goddesses in different regions of India were originally worshipped by the aboriginal inhabitants of the locality and gradually tantamounted with a God of recognized Brahminical pantheon.



The Skanda Puran and the Purusottam Kshetra Mahatmya recognize the worship of Jagannath as Neelamadhab by one tribal, Viswvasu Savara in the Nilachala (Nil Hills). There is a stout resemblance which raised in the Prachi Mahatmya that, Jagannath was worshipped by the tribals. It is a strong support to the notion that in the present scenario on the bank of the river Prachi there is a village in the east side of the river called, 'Savarapalli' and Viswvasu savar belongs to this village. In fact the Niladri Mohodaya mentions the Lord Purusottam saying "Not the learned in the four holy scriptures but the man who believes, is dear to me." Jagannath is the God for all.

Once upon a time the worship of Lord Jagannath was performed by the savaras, but such practices has been dwindled down with the coming up of the Daitas ; who are the inhabitants of the savar clan. Gradually they have developed by their birth and became expert in reciting the Vedas, Mantras and Slokas and had awareness of the daily rituals of Sri Jagannath. In Orissan culture the gap between man and the supreme Devine has been bridged in Jagannath Culture & Jagannath Himself is a highly humanized deity. Like the human aspect the daily rituals shows that how He gets up from the bed, takes His bath, changes the attire, takes up public grievances, takes breakfast and lunch, enjoys an afternoon nap, decorates Himself before going to bed, goes for hunting, uses cosmetics, goes for boating during summer, covers Himself sufficiently for the winter, falls sick once a year. All these are human qualities. He is considered as omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient means super human Purusottam. Supporting this a poem of poet Dinakrushna Das's Jagannath Janana recognizes with 'ka' Anuprasa means the starting letter of each line of each stanza is 'ka', like

*'Kambu katakare Niladri Nagare
Pahanti sankha bajila
Kambu chakradhar derarajankar
Nidra turite bhajila'*

The worship of the Jagannath may be divided under three heads:-

- (1) The daily rituals or 'Nitis' which are fixed and observed everyday as routine course.
- (2) The special "nitis" according to the specialty of certain days (i.e. Thursday, Amavasya, Ekadasi, and *Naksashtra* vandapana etc.)
- (3) The various festivities are celebrated through out the year both inside and outside the temple. The worship of Jagannath generally done by the sevakas known as Pujapanda, Suaravadu, Pratihari, Paliamahasar, Paniapta, Pradhani, Panliadu, Jaravadu, Rosava paika, Paliapatri, Cangada mekapa, Muduli, Candana ghatuar, Palia khuntia, Hadapa Nayak, Bediajogania, Gochikara vaijyantri Dhukudidwaram etc. It can be said, that, Orissa is a rare specimen at a reversed sanskritisation so far as the institution of Jagannath culture is the flow from the tribes to the Hindu groups. All above the priests known as the Daitas descendants of savar tribe , and the Paties hybrid off springs of Aryan-Dravidian sources, have made their association established with the function and worship of Lord Jagannath right from the inception of this institution.

The term chhatishnijoaga gives the present Daitas, a privileged identity, which is qualitative, and conspicuous at any time or under any circumstance. Since the time immemorial the method of worshipping management attitude depends critically on social values and indigenous practice of management which exemplify the successful



blending of traditional values. The Daitapatis association with Jagannath has been a tradition and a pluralistic nature of historical interpretations. Thanks to this hiatus, the worship of Jagannath culture is synonymous with the culture of Orissan people. Amazingly Raja Mansingh notifying 'Orissa' is no fit subject for conquest as "from end to end it is on region of pilgrimage."

However the Jagannath tradition is all pervasive as is marked in the land of Orissa, depicting three colours White, Yellow and Black. The three deities signify the approach of Oriya's that is universalism as a matter of principle of co-existence. Since the ancient, period passing to the medieval period and in course to the present, the form of Jagannath worship has been coined by the different ways of religious interpretation. The religious impact of Jagannath upon society was there in medieval period. Example can be taken Sri Krushna Chaitanya the first fan of Sri Jagannath was overwhelmed with emotion and danced out of joy. He lost control of his senses when he beheld the image of Jagannath seated on Asthan. The first darsan (sight) and devotional worship of Lord had a lasting effect upon Chaitanya's mind. In a state of deep trance, he realized his indissoluble bond with Jagannath.

The most typical worship of Lord Jagannath is when Jagannath cannot be seen for fifteen days called as the Anavasara or Anasara or Nirodhana commences from Jyestha purnima and ends with the Ashadha amavasya. The literary meaning of the Anasara of Lord Jagannath is it really denotes a period of indisposition of the deities during which period only the kith and kin of the Deities enjoy the special and exclusive rights to nourish them back to normal health. This is symbolic of the

human-touch given to the life of the Deities by the tribals. The worship of Jagannath by the Daipaties is very secret. Narayan as Jagannath, Bhubaneswari as Subhadra and Vasudev as Balabhadra.

The car festival of Lord Jagannath is concerned in the world context as the symbol of intellectual tradition of Orissan History. In the month of Jyestha the car festival of lord Jagannath held at Puri with a great pomp. Which shows the universal worship of human society, irrespective of caste, creed, colour and sex. From the nook and corner of the world people come forward to the destination of Puri and offer their mass worship by opening up their hands upwards. On the three cars Jagannath, Subhadra and Balabhadra represent their power and blessings for the shake of the human civilization. As for the attire, the Duttamahapatras and the Suddhasuras are in charge of applying only white flowers, sandal wood paste and herbal ointments; Tulsi garlands and a lot of amenities to the body of the devinities. The system of Chhapanpauti bhoga is used every day for worshipping the deities which is a vital aspect of Orissan Culture. In the world context where there is no religious shrines or any temple where such type bhoga system is used for the God. In the Anandabazar each and every day, thousands of pilgrims are eating the prasada bhoga, called as Mahaprasada. Every rituals and the aspects of the Jagannath worship is the vital segments in the history of Orissan Culture.

In this paper the Jagannath worship has been exemplified as the core backbone of the Orissan Culture. So far Purusottamkshetra is famous for its catholicity over the human civilization. The Mahaprasada bhoga concept is the symbol of universal brotherhood like



'Basudheiba Kutumbakum' that has marginalized consideration of caste and creed and sex primarily because of its origin and evolution is the back bone of the tribal cultural segments. The syntheses and eclectism have been the forte of Jagannath. So the worship of Jagannath is the melting pot of all religious ceremonies and principles of Hindu communities.

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